General Faculties Council
Committee on the Learning Environment
Approved Minutes

Wednesday, September 07, 2011
3-15, UHALL
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

ATTENDEES:
Colleen Skidmore, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Academic) and Co-Chair, Renée Elio (Delegate), Emerson Csorba, Nima Yousefi Moghaddam (Delegate), Ernie Ingles, Scott Delinger (Delegate), Norma Nocente, Ada Schmude (Delegate), Rachel Milner, Karim Damji, John Boeglin, Trevor Woods, Anne McIntosh, Erendira Cervantes-Altamirano, Brock Richardson, Lili Liu, Fern Snart, Deanna Williamson, Janet Scott Hoyt, Garry Bodnar (Coordinator & Scribe)

PRESENTERS AND GUESTS:
Garry Bodnar, Coordinator, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)
John Boeglin, Chair, Joint Subcommittee on the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)/Teaching, Learning and Technology (TLAT) Council Fostering Pedagogy of Technology
Emerson Csorba, Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies
Scott Delinger, IT Strategic Initiatives Officer, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Steven Dew, Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies (and Member, Teaching, Learning and Technology (TLAT) Council)
Marion Haggarty-France, University Secretary
Nima Yousefi Moghaddam, Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies
Deanna Williamson, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Member Cross-Appointed from the GFC Academic Planning Committee (APC)

OBSERVER:
Bill Connor, Interim Vice-Provost (Academic) (and Incoming Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE))

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Boeglin/Csorba

The Co-Chair asked that an additional discussion item—a report from the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI)—be added to the agenda. Dr Skidmore apologized for the lateness of this addition and referenced material in support of this item that was distributed to members at the meeting.

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) approve the Agenda, as amended.

CARRIED

2.   Approval of the Regular Session Minutes of May 5, 2011

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Csorba/Moghaddam

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) approve the Minutes of May 5, 2011.
CARRIED

3.   Comments from the Co-Chairs

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

4.   Orientation and Kick-off (no documents)

Presenters: Colleen Skidmore, Vice-Provost and Interim Vice-President (Academic) and Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE); Marion Haggarty-France, University Secretary; Garry Bodnar, Coordinator, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (and Secretary to General Faculties Council)

Purpose of the Proposal: To provide new and continuing members of the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) with an (annual) orientation to the legislative and administrative frameworks in which this standing committee of General Faculties Council (GFC) will operate during the Academic Year 2011-2012.

Discussion:
Ms Haggarty-France welcomed members to the new academic year and provided a general overview of the orientation process undertaken by University Governance.

Mr Bodnar provided a formal orientation, aided by a web-based presentation, to members, highlighting the following: the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (*PSLA*); various GFC and GFC Standing Committee Terms of Reference; samples of GFC CLE Agendas, Minutes, and Outlines of Issue; and other relevant resource documentation upon which members can draw as they perform their duties on GFC CLE.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5.   GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies
      Report: Terms of Reference and Membership

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Emerson Csorba, Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies; Nima Yousefi Moghaddam, Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies; Steven Dew, Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies (and Member, Teaching, Learning and Technology (TLAT) Council)

Purpose of the Proposal: To update GFC CLE on the GFC CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies' progress over the Summer, 2011 and receive members' feedback on the proposed Terms of Reference and membership for this subcommittee.

Discussion:
Mr Csorba, Vice-President (Academic) of the Students' Union (SU) and one of the three Co-Chairs of the GFC CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies, introduced the item to members by providing a brief summary of the Subcommittee's role and responsibilities and its membership. He reflected on the qualities he believed all University of Alberta students should have, regardless of their programs. He noted that, with the formal establishment of a set of agreed-upon attributes and competencies, the University would be the first Canadian post-secondary institution to provide this to its graduates. He commented that the Subcommittee had a broad membership that was intended to be representative of the wider University community.

Mr Moghaddam, Vice-President (Academic) of the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) and Co-Chair of the above-noted subcommittee, in turn spoke to the work undertaken by this group over the summer. He noted that the Subcommittee was likely to create two workings groups, each of which would address specific elements that fall under the general aegis of the larger group.

Dr Dew, Member of the Teaching, Learning and Technology (TLAT) Council (and Associate Dean, Faculty of Engineering) and Co-Chair of the Subcommittee, noted his support for the work that had been done to date by this group and indicated that the Subcommittee's Terms of Reference, as before GFC CLE members on this occasion, were reflective of the direction in which the Subcommittee anticipated moving in the near future.

During the ensuing discussion, the presenters addressed questions and comments from members including, but not limited to, the following: the Subcommittee was exhorted to ensure that, when reflecting on a possible set of attributes and competencies, they not settle for the *status quo* but, instead, challenge themselves to reach for and aspire to something considerably more, a view which members agreed should be explicitly set out in the Subcommittee's Terms of Reference; the Subcommittee should reflect, as well, on what it is that makes programs offered by the University of Alberta distinct from those offered at other institutions and build on this accordingly; an evaluative framework should be kept in mind when reviewing the literature associated with this topic, as it was important to ensure that measures were in place to determine if and when established goals were duly achieved; the membership of the Subcommittee could be expanded to include all students serving on GFC CLE; and whether or not co- and/or extra-curricular activities would be considered by the Subcommittee as it carries out its work and whether or not an individual with expertise in these specific areas should be asked to serve on this group.

Mr Csorba thanked members for their comments and suggestions and indicated the final (revised) version of the Subcommittee's Terms of Reference would come back to GFC CLE at its October, 2011 meeting for approval.

6. Joint Subcommittee on the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)/Teaching, Learning and Technology (TLAT) Council Fostering Pedagogy of Technology Report (no documents)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: John Boeglin, Chair, Joint Subcommittee on the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)/Teaching, Learning and Technology (TLAT) Council Fostering Pedagogy of Technology

Purpose of the Proposal: To update GFC CLE on the progress to date of the Joint Subcommittee on the GFC CLE/TLAT Council Fostering Pedagogy of Technology.

Discussion:
Dr Boeglin, Chair of the Joint Subcommittee on the GFC CLE/TLAT Council Fostering Pedagogy of Technology, provided detail on the work done to date by this subcommittee. He provided information on meetings held by this group over the summer; referenced the inventory carried out by members on what has been done to date at the University of Alberta on the integration of technology into the teaching environment; outlined what would likely be the specific goals for this group as it continued its work, with clear focus on campus-wide, rather than Faculty-specific, initiatives and recommendations; and described the Subcommittee's current membership.

6A.   GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Colleen Skidmore, Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) and Chair, GFC CLE Subcommittee on Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI)

Purpose of the Proposal: To update GFC CLE on the progress to date of the GFC CLE Subcommittee on USRI.

Discussion:
Dr Skidmore presented the USRI Subcommittee's report. She drew members' attention to the draft revised policy set out in Section 111.3 (*Teaching and Learning and Teaching Evaluation/Universal Student Ratings of Instruction*) of the GFC Policy Manual that was distributed at the meeting. She noted these (proposed) revisions represented the work of the Subcommittee over the summer, based upon broad consultation with a number of key stakeholders and with representatives of Academic Information and Communication Technologies (AICT).

Dr Skidmore indicated the Subcommittee would reconvene on September 19, 2011 to review this proposal and, based on the additional consultation, revise it as necessary. The final proposal would then come forward to GFC CLE at its October 5, 2011 meeting for review and formal recommendation. She noted she hoped the final proposal would find final approval at the November 7, 2011 meeting of the GFC Executive Committee.

During the ensuing discussion, the presenter addressed questions and comments from members including, but not limited to, the following: clarification on the nature of and points of access to the printed numerical summaries, as referenced in the proposal; who had access to the numerical summaries and how delegation of authority from one administrator to another (eg, from a Chair to an Associate Chair) with regard to access would occur; and the use of the summaries at meetings of Faculty Evaluation Committees (FECs).

STANDING ITEMS

7.   GFC Academic Planning Committee (APC) Update

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Deanna Williamson, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Member Cross-Appointed from the GFC Academic Planning Committee (APC)

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:
Dr Williamson provided a brief report on the June 8 and June 22, 2011 meetings of GFC APC.

8.   GFC Academic Standards Committee (ASC) Update

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Colleen Skidmore, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Academic) and Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) (and Past Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee (ASC))

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:
Dr Skidmore provided a brief report on the May 19 and June 16, 2011 meetings of GFC ASC.

9.   GFC Facilities Development Committee (FDC) Update

There was no material before members.

Presenter: Colleen Skidmore, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Academic) and Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:
Dr Skidmore noted that there had not been a meeting of the GFC Facilities Development Committee (FDC) since the last meeting of GFC CLE on May 5, 2011.

10.   Teaching, Learning and Technology (TLAT) Council Update

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Scott Delinger, IT Strategic Initiatives Officer, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:
Dr Delinger noted that there had not been a meeting of TLAT Council since the last meeting of GFC CLE on May 5, 2011.

Mr Woods, Executive Director of Academic Information and Communications Technologies (AICT), took this opportunity to apprise members of smart classroom upgrades undertaken by this unit over the late Spring and throughout the summer. He noted that, as of today, this project was now completed.

11.   Question Period

There were no questions.

INFORMATION ITEMS

12.   Items Approved by the Committee by E-Mail Ballots (non-debatable)

There were no items to date.

13.   Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items to date.

CLOSING SESSION

14.   Adjournment

The Co-Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:45 pm.