General Faculties Council
Committee on the Learning Environment
Approved Open Session Minutes

Wednesday, November 01, 2017
2-31 South Academic Building (SAB)
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Sarah Forgie, Chair	Janice Miller-Young	**REGRETS**:
Samer Adeeb	Norma Rodenburg	Jeff Rawlings
Janice Causgrove Dunn	Shane Scott	Mani Vaidyanathan
Kathleen DeLong	Andrews Tawiah	
Robert Desjardins	Jennifer Tupper	**STAFF**:
Yuuki Ito	Stanley Varnhagen	Meg Brolley
Firouz Khodayari	Janet Wesselius	
Eva Lemaire		

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Tupper/Scott

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Agenda.
CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of September 6, 2017

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Lemaire/Causgrove Dunn

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Minutes of September 6, 2017.
CARRIED

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of October 4, 2017

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Varnhagen/Miller-Young

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Minutes of October 4, 2017.
CARRIED

4. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

The Chair noted that Harvey Weingarten, President and CEO of the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO), and former President of the University of Calgary, would be at the university on November 14 to

speak about learning outcomes. She noted that Dr Weingarten brings a perspective from Ontario where the government has mandated learning outcomes.

Dr Forgie reported on the survey experiential learning continues that looks at cataloguing current opportunities and asking what additional resources would be helpful.

Finally, she reported on a blanket exercise that the Provost's Office had participated in and asked if the committee would be interested in participating in such an event; links to such opportunities would be shared with the committee.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5.   Proposed Student Groups Policy Suite

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): André Costopoulos, Vice-Provost and Dean of Students

Discussion:
Dean Costopoulos reported that the current procedure was approved when student groups were removed from the Code of Student Behaviour a few years ago and that it has no associated policy. He indicated that proposed policy suite would clarify the relationship between the university and student groups including whether the university wants to have a relationship, the nature of relationship, and how it is regulated. Recognized student groups have the privilege of booking space and using the university logo. Dean Costopoulos emphasized that the proposed policy suite includes obligations on both sides and is primarily concerned with risk to people and property.

The committee discussed the time required for applications for student group events to be approved, that the Students' Union and Graduate Students' Association would be bound by this policy, how situations which contravene the policy or procedures would be handled, and risk to reputation.

6.   University of Alberta Open Education

Presenter(s): Krysta McNutt, OER Project Manager, Centre for Teaching and Learning

Ms McNutt presented an overview of Open Education, defining the term and associated resources, providing perspectives on its use and referring to the University of Alberta OER awards.

She provided an overview on openly licensed education content and licensing and the ability of individuals to put restrictions on how the resource is used by others. Ms McNutt indicated that assigning a license does not change copyright.

Ms McNutt indicated that OER is used to reduce costs to students, increase the quality of teaching materials and opportunities for creative pedagogy, and make educational materials more accessible and discoverable. She noted that students are asking for it and instructors already do it.

She then gave the committee information about the University of Alberta OER Awards which would be announced in mid-November; this grant program would connect faculty with CTL and Libraries, and provide support to instructors.

Discussion:

Members discussed the following: would university fund current websites which use OER, some of which are quite complex; concerns that resources are not peer reviewed; creation of new resources rather than using existing resources; OER may not be suitable in all disciplines.

Other issues raised included: content creators as stakeholders and how resources can be changed; accessibility related to device quality/access; importance of information literacy and necessity of critical thinking skills; how to recognize and deal with content mistakes; the potential to use as a class activity to build and improve content; and the efforts made by the bookstore to keep textbook prices as low as possible.

EARLY CONSULTATION

7. Experiential Learning (no documents)

Presenter(s): Sarah Forgie

The Chair noted that experiential learning is one of the themes in *For the Public Good* and indicated that Norma Nocente and her team from CTL have been engaged to conduct an online survey and interviews to explore what is happening at the university. She indicated that this will be going forward to General Faculties Council for early consultation and asked for the committee's input.

Discussion:
The committee provided feedback that included: how is experiential learning defined, how it the term used in different contexts, and how they would like to use it; the costs associated with it especially in light of budget reduction discussion; assessing supplementary fees to students to ensure quality experiences (hire staff to supervise and ensure client safety as necessary); how experiential learning experiences can be compared between classes and programs; whether labs and design courses were considered to be experiential learning.

Other comments included: reflection on why we do it, what we learned, and what was the educational benefit; the need for continuing professional development for instructors; how to improve current experiences; evaluation of what is done well; and co-curricular opportunities.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

8. Updates (no documents)
    A. Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

    Dr Miller Young provided an update on the learning outcomes resources guide on how to write and use learning outcomes, and how to use them in evaluation.

    B. Information Technology – no update
    No update

    C. Learning Services
    Dr DeLong reported that the Cameron Library was now open 24 hours and the safety and security of both staff and students was being considered very seriously. She further noted that a staff member was hired to work with CTL on OER.

    D. General Faculties Council (GFC)

Dr Lemaire noted that GFC approved at its last meeting: the CLE recommendations on USRIs, the first of the GFC committee terms of reference from ad hoc recommendations; changes of wording in the University Calendar to Aboriginal identity from Aboriginal ancestry.

9.   Question Period

The Chair noted that a small working group would be formed to look at recommendations, work plan, and next steps related to the report on USRIs.

INFORMATION REPORTS

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

There were no items.

11.   Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm