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

Wednesday, April 04, 2018
2-31 South Academic Building (SAB)
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:
Sarah Forgie, Chair
Samer Adeeb
Janice Causgrove Dunn
Kathleen DeLong
Robert Desjardins
Jeff Rawlings
Norma Rodenburg
Jennifer Tupper

Mani Vaidyanathan
Stanley Varnhagen
Delegate:
Sasha van der Klein

Regrets:
Firouz Khodayari
Eva Lemaire
Janice Miller-Young

Shane Scott
Andrews Tawiah
Janet Wesselius

Staff:
Heather Richholt, Coordinator
Meg Brolley, GFC Secretary

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Varnhagen/DeLong

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

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of February 7, 2018

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Tupper/Rodenburg

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Minutes of March 7, 2018 as amended.
CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

The Chair drew the attention of members to an invitation to participate in a survey about imagining the university 25 years in the future.

The Chair reminded members of the May 4th Festival of Teaching and Learning which will include presentations, workshops, and networking sessions. The Keynote is José Antonio Bowen, PhD, author of Teaching Naked.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4.   Moodle Syllabus and Mapping Tool - Update (no documents)

Presenter(s): Ken Cor, Assistant Dean, Assessment, Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

Dr Cor demonstrated the syllabus tool and explained how the data compiled allows for searchable topics and outcomes.

Discussion:
During the ensuing discussion, members expressed several comments and questions, including but not limited to: e-class data; transferring course data and information to a new instructor; monitoring curriculum; the potential for identifying overlap and redundancies in courses across faculties; how this information could help with issues of accreditation; data in and data out and the commitment of a faculty to use the tool consistently in order to realize the benefits.

The Chair noted that this is a great example of how the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF) can help a small project make a large impact.

5.   Update on Policy Development - Teaching Evaluation

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Sarah Forgie, Chair, CLE and Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives)

Discussion:
The Chair reminded members that the transition of GFC Policy Section 111 into UAPPOL was one of the recommendations that the committee made to GFC as part of its review of teaching, learning and teaching evaluation. She noted that the policy would contain a high level view and associated procedures would provide the detail on how the policy would be implemented.

Members discussed the draft wording and provided comments on: the role of teaching evaluation on FECs; how graduate students who teach fit into the policy; whether graduate student supervision is included; evaluation of contract instructors; the synergies between research and teaching; and emphasis on teaching that is impactful and of high quality. The committee discussed the importance of multi-faceted evaluation including whether it would be used for every course and every offering, or used more selectively. Members also discussed if alternate wording to multi-faceted, such as breadth and depth of evaluation, would better express the concept.

6.   Updates (no documents)

      A. Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

The Chair referred members to the CTL website for more information about open educational resources and the Festival of Teaching and Learning on May 4th. She also noted that adjudication for the 2018-19 McCalla Professorships were underway.

      B. Information Technology

Mr Rawlings noted that an upgrade to the virtual learning environment over the summer would change the look and feel and version 3.4 will also incorporate a Moodle mobile app. He also announced they hope to have the new student response system ready by September 2018. This will allow for the use of smartphones as well as iClickers.

      C. Learning Services

Dr DeLong noted that the House of Commons Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology launched a review of the Copyright Act on March 29, 2018 with a completion target of early March 2019.

D. General Faculties Council (GFC)

Dr Lemaire will update the committee next month.

E. Student Success Centre

Dr Desjardins will update the committee next month.

7.   Question Period

A member asked about the use of Chromebooks in labs. Mr Rawlings responded that university is currently experimenting with using Chromebooks instead of desktop computers in some computer labs.

INFORMATION REPORTS

8.   Items Approved by the Committee by E-Mail Ballots (non-debatable) - No items to date

There were no items.

9.   Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings - No items to date

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

10.   Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:45 p.m.