UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

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

Wednesday, December 05, 2018
2-31 South Academic Building (SAB)
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Sarah Forgie	Mani Vaidyanathan	Eva Lemaire
Dale Askey	Stanley Varnhagen	Norma Rodenburg
Akanksha Bhatnagar	Christine Wiesenthal	Janet Wesselius
Kyle Foster	Kevin Zentner	
Brian Maraj		Staff:
Janice Miller-Young	Regrets:	Heather Richholt, Assistant
Jeff Rawlings	Masoud Aliramezani	Secretary to GFC
Beth Richardson (delegate)	Janice Causgrove Dunn	
Jennifer Tupper	Robert Desjardins	

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Zentner/Rawlings

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

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of October 31, 2018

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Tupper/Maraj

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Open Session Minutes of October 31, 2018.
CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

The Chair asked for a member to serve on the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF) Selection Committee; Dr Varnhagen volunteered.

The Chair noted that there would be a working group established to look into handwritten exams and asked for members interested in participating. Dr Rawlings asked to be included especially as issues of "bring your own device" and exam integrity relate to Information Technology. Members agreed that expertise from outside of CLE should be sought for the working group.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4.   Curriculum Renewal - Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS), Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Steven Patterson, Associate Chair, Academic, School of Dentistry, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry; Gisele Gaudet-Amigo, Curriculum Coordinator, School of Dentistry, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

Discussion:
Dr Patterson gave an overview of the current DDS curriculum. He noted that many of the courses were taken alongside undergraduate medical students which caused issues for course sequencing, professional identity, and foundational, clinical learning. He also noted the significant assessment burden that DDS students faced. Close to 900 individual assessments, over 4 years, were common and Dr Patterson felt there was questionable value to that level of assessment.

Dr Patterson reviewed the curriculum renewal process and the development of the 5 guiding principles: Learning Pathways; Student Experience; Content; Delivery; and Assessment. He thanked his colleagues in the Faculty of Education who helped with this process.

During the discussion members expressed several comments and questions, including but not limited to: the financial outlay required for this change, especially during the initial transition; the next accreditation cycle for the DDS program; the collaborative change management strategies employed; mental health education as a sub-competency of the professionalism section of the curriculum; and promotion of mental health strategies and education throughout the new curriculum.

5.   Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) for the Academic Year 2017/18

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Jeff Rawlings, Director, Relationship Management, Information Services & Technology; Margarita Stewart, Team Leader/Analyst, Information Services & Technology - Teaching & Learning Services

Discussion:
Mr Rawlings noted that the USRI response rate of 57.7% had been fairly consistent over the previous 4 years and noted that but that it dipped to 53.5% in 2018. He indicated that this might be attributable to a change in the security system that required students to clear their cache in order to log in.

During the discussion members expressed several comments and questions, including but not limited to: the 7 day window and reminder emails; whether or not more time would increase the response rate; the risk that some labs are missed if their end dates are not correctly entered in campus solutions; how the university could improve ease of access to USRI results and if this would encourage greater student participation; that both the Faculties and IST send communications encouraging participation by students; the trend toward greater use of mobile devices and the positive response to mobile access; strategies for increasing participation such as providing class time for this purpose; and the ability to edit responses up to the submission deadline.

6.   Update - Classroom Evergreening

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Jeff Rawlings, Director Digital Learning Environments, Information Services & Technology - Relationship Management; Adam Giraldeau, Manager, Strategy and Infrastructure, Information Services & Technology - Teaching & Learning Services

Discussion:

Mr Giraldeau gave an overview of the Evergreening process including the change from analog to digital wiring, and challenges posed due to the exchange rate and tariffs on materials from the US. He noted the tiered tech standard, the significant reduction in cost for the tier 1 standard, and the reduction in classrooms with technology due to space planning and repurposing. He also noted that both the Edmonton Clinic Health Academy (ECHA) and the Centennial Centre for Interdisciplinary Science (CCIS) are 9 years old so are due for an update in the coming year to align with the goal that no classrooms have tech older than 10 years.

Members discussed the minimum standards for tech and the components of tier 1 as well as the other tiers and unique requirements for some classrooms.

7.   Draft Teaching Policy

Presenter(s): Sarah Forgie, Chair GFC CLE and Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives), Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Discussion:
The Chair explained that the draft Teaching Policy was part of the process to transition GFC Policy 111 to U of A Policies and Procedures On-Line (UAPPOL).

Members discussed the emphasis on research, Campus Alberta outcomes, and general guidelines.

The Chair noted that she would share the document with the members for their comments.

8.   Updates

A. Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) – Dr Miller-Young noted that the Centre was currently undergoing a self-study as the initial stages of their review. They would be having their site visit in June 2019. She asked members for ideas on how to encourage feedback from those in the community who had not engaged with CTL.

B. Information Technology - There was no update.

C. Learning Services – Dr Askey asked members to consider their ideas of the optimum level of service during break periods. He noted that Libraries needed to balance providing good service with being a good employer and that this would come forward for discussion at a later date.

D. General Faculties Council - Ms Richholt gave an update on the November 26, 2018 meeting of GFC. She noted that the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry's proposal to remove the limit on the number of students who could be admitted to the MD Program through the Indigenous Application process was approved as were the new Terms of Reference for the GFC University Teaching Awards Committee (UTAC). Discussion items included the Digital Scholarship Centre, an update on the Tri-Council Draft Data Management Policy, the new Budget Model, and the Board/GFC/Senate Summit. Two questions were submitted regarding the university's use of Gmail, and the fairness of decision making regarding the university's signature areas.

A member also noted that the Dean of Students spoke about student mental health issues on campus.

E. Academic Success Centre - There was no update.

9.   Question Period
There were no questions.

INFORMATION REPORTS

10. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings
There were no items.

11. Items Approved by the Committee by E-Mail Ballots (non-debatable)
There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

12. Adjournment
The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.