



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

Wednesday, March 03, 2021
Zoom Virtual Meeting
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

John Nychka, Chair
Dale Askey
Benjamin Cheung
David Draper
Ivan Fair
Simran Ghoman
Bora Kim
Janice Kung

Hollis Lai
Brian Maraj
Abner Monteiro
Kerry Mummery
Karsten Mundel
Cheryl Poth
Sachiketha Reddy
Norma Rodenburg
Ali Shiri

non-voting:

Cosette Lemelin
Mike MacGregor
Kate Peters

REGRETS:

Brad Hamdon

Staff:

Heather Richholt, Coordinator

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): John Nychka, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives), Chair GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)

Motion: Draper/Cheung

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning environment approve the agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of February 3, 2021

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): John Nychka, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives), Chair CLE

Motion: Shiri/Maraj

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the open session minutes of February 3, 2021.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair (no documents)- Provost Taskforce on Remote Teaching and Learning

Presenter(s): John Nychka, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives), Chair CLE

Discussion:

The Chair spoke about the three motions related to remote learning, which came forward as recommendations from the Council on Student Affairs (COSA) and were approved by GFC at the meeting of February 22, 2021.

He noted the discussion at GFC about the complexity of these issues and GFC's support of the need to provide alternatives for those who needed them. The Chair also made note of the legal framework and supports available through the Dean of Students and the Centre for Teaching and Learning. He explained that the Provost Taskforce on Remote Teaching and Learning was comprised of a working group and an advisory group and spoke about their roles and mandate. He explained that the working group would develop recommendations related to communications, exams and remote proctoring, internet connectivity, and participation grades, and send them to the advisory group for feedback.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. Updates

A. Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

Presenter(s): Cosette Lemelin, Assistant Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning

Discussion:

Dr Lemelin spoke about the Open Education Symposium that was happening that week, and the recent improvements that had been made to the CTL website.

B. Information Technology

Presenter(s): Mike MacGregor, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Information Services & Technology)

Discussion:

Dr MacGregor spoke about recent Board of Governors Committee discussions about cybersecurity and an Information Technology strategy for the university.

C. Library and Museums

Presenter(s): Dale Askey, Vice-Provost (Library and Museums) and Chief Librarian

Discussion:

Dr Askey spoke about the recent change in the public health directives related to libraries and noted that Cameron Library would be opening up for in-person access on March 29. He also mentioned the ongoing plan to move the Health Sciences Library to the Edmonton Clinic Health Academy (ECHA) and noted that the design for space was the next step in the process.

Members discussed the reopening of Cameron Library and the staff response.

D. General Faculties Council

Presenter(s): Kate Peters, GFC Secretary and Manager, GFC Services

Discussion:

Ms Peters spoke about the five recommendations of the GFC Committee of the Whole that were received by GFC on February 8. She also noted the early consultation on the Clean Air Strategy at the February 22 meeting, and upcoming items for the March 22 meeting: Teaching Policy, FGSR Supervisory Initiatives, and COVID-19 and Fall 2021 Planning.

5. Teaching and Learning Policy

Materials and presentation before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): John Nychka, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives), Chair CLE

Discussion:

The Chair presented on the past work that had been done on this policy as well as the current development and consultation path toward approval and implementation. He made note of the requirement for multifaceted evaluation of teaching and the work that had been done to identify the elements of effective teaching. He also acknowledged the work on Graduate Supervision that was being done by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research.

During the discussion, members asked questions and expressed opinions including but not limited to:

- the compositions and mandates of the Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation Working Group, and the Taskforce on Student Experience of Teaching and Learning;
- ideas about how to capture data from students who withdraw from a course and were not able to fill out the Universal Student Rating of Instruction (USRI);
- that evaluation of teaching was important for professional development and that the university needed to take the time to do it effectively; and
- the involvement of Faculty Relations, and the Association of Academic Staff of the University of Alberta (AASUA) in the development of this policy.

6. Update on the CLE Taskforce on Student Experience of Teaching and Learning (SETL)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Cheryl Poth, Co-Chair SETL Taskforce; Brian Maraj, Co-Chair SETL Taskforce

Discussion:

The CLE Taskforce of the Student Experience of Teaching and Learning held their third meeting earlier that day. The committee revisited the outcomes of their first two discussions and the co-chairs summarized some of the learnings:

- The need to collect data beyond the instructor themselves but about other things that contribute to the learning environment.
- That the Teaching Framework could provide some ideas on how to formulate questions.
- That accessibility to the students and instructors should be a priority. Finding these tools and the data should be easier. The interface needs improvement and that the instructor and student should be able to more easily navigate the results and perhaps see the evolution of results over the time of the course. This will contribute to closing the feedback loop for students.
- That USRIs be renamed as Student Collaboration on Organization and Pedagogy (SCOOP) "Give me the scoop on this class!"

The Taskforce also reviewed the questions and provided feedback and advice and feedback to CTL on the questions including the purpose of USRIs, and the way to evaluate engagement in the course.

The committee decided to spend their next meeting delving into some of the constructs in the Teaching Effectiveness Framework in break-out rooms.

7. Question Period

There were no questions.

INFORMATION REPORTS

8. Items Approved by the Committee by E-Mail Ballots

There were no items.

9. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

10. Adjournment

- Next meeting of CLE: March 31, 2021
- Next meeting of GFC: March 22, 2021

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.