



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council
Executive Committee
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, November 05, 2012
3-07 SAB, South Academic Building
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Voting Members:

Martin Ferguson-Pell	Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Acting Chair, GFC Executive Committee (Delegate)
Colleen Skidmore	Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Academic) (Delegate)
Gerry Kendal	Vice-Provost and University Registrar
Dustin Chelen	Students' Union Vice-President (Academic)
Nathan Andrews	Graduate Student Association Vice-President (Academic)
Ed Blackburn	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Lise Gotell	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Kaori Kabata	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Wendy Rodgers	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Chris de Gara	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Anita Molzahn	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Duncan Saunders	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Adam Woods	Undergraduate Student, Member of GFC

Presenter(s):

Garry Bodnar	Director, General Faculties Council (GFC) Services and Secretary to GFC
Corey Chevraux	Supervisor (Information Technology), Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
Bill Connor	Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction)
Martin Ferguson-Pell	Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Acting Chair, GFC Executive Committee
Martin Guardado	Academic Director, English Language Program, Faculty of Extension
Marion Haggarty-France	University Secretary
Ann Hodgson	Manager, Governance Operations, University Governance
Gerry Kendal	Vice-Provost and University Registrar
Heather McRae	Associate Dean (Engaged Learning), Faculty of Extension
George Pavlich	Associate Vice-President (Research)
Ada Schmude	Associate Registrar (Enrolment Services), Office of the Registrar
William Street	Associate Dean (Student Programs), Faculty of Arts
Anna Vocioni	Assistant Registrar (Examinations and Timetabling), Office of the Registrar

Staff:

Garry Bodnar	Director, General Faculties Council (GFC) Services and Secretary to GFC
Andrea Patrick	Scribe

Marion Haggarty-France University Secretary

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Skidmore/Blackburn

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of October 9, 2012

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Chelen/Woods

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the Minutes of October 9, 2012.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Acting Chair

Dr Ferguson-Pell commented on a number of items of interest to members.

ACTION ITEMS

4. Faculty of Extension Proposed New Course Designator – English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Heather McRae, Associate Dean (Engaged Learning), Faculty of Extension; Martin Guardado, Academic Director, English Language Program, Faculty of Extension

Purpose of the Proposal: To introduce in the Faculty of Extension a new course designator EAP (English for Academic Purposes).

Discussion:

Dr McRae stated that the proposed EAP designation has been requested repeatedly within the Faculty of Extension in order to provide formal clarification for students and staff on the separation between current non-credit ESL (English as a Second Language) courses and those credit courses offered by the Faculty designed to prepare students for study at English-speaking institutions (and wider communities).

Dr Blackburn commented on the appropriateness and validity of certain criteria used to satisfy English Language Proficiency (ELP) requirements, as set out in Section 13.3.3 of the University Calendar. Mr Bodnar suggested that Dr Blackburn contact Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) Bill Connor to raise his specific concerns and allow for a discussion on the issue in the relevant forum (eg, the GFC ASC Subcommittee on Standards (SOS)).

Mr Kendal added that the Office of the Registrar has been involved in the development of this proposal and that it has his full support.

Mr Andrews noted that the policy changes were not reflected within the comparative tables provided by the presenters.

Motion: Blackburn/Skidmore

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, a new course designator, EAP (English for Academic Purposes), as submitted by the Faculty of Extension, as set forth in Attachment 1, to take effect upon final approval.

CARRIED

5. Faculty of Arts Proposed New Course Designator – Hebrew (HEBR)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: William Street, Associate Dean (Student Programs), Faculty of Arts

Purpose of the Proposal: To introduce a course designator (HEBR) for the Biblical Hebrew course taught currently as RELIG 201. This change will identify the course as a language course rather than a lecture course in Religious Studies, provide a clear reason why there is a “lab” component, and provide a direct identification between the course content and the course designator.

Discussion:

Dr Street explained to members the history of the proposal and clarified that, although the course content is not changing, it makes more sense for this course to be offered by the Department of History and Classics rather than through Religious Studies. He reported that, currently, students are not aware that this course satisfies the Language Other than English (LOE) requirement and that there continues to be significant enrolment for this course.

Mr Kendal added that the Office of the Registrar has been involved in the development of this proposal and that it has his full support.

Motion: Woods/Gotell

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, a new course designator for the Hebrew language (HEBR), as submitted by the Faculty of Arts, as set forth in Attachment 1, to take effect in the Fall Term 2013.

CARRIED

6. Rescission of GFC Policy Manual Section 120 (University Community Relations)/Subsections 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6) – Proposal from the Office of the Vice-President (Research)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: George Pavlich, Associate Vice-President (Research)

Purpose of the Proposal: To rescind GFC Policy Manual Section 120/Subsections 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6. The issues addressed in these sections are now covered by several more recent UAPPOL policies and

institutional documents.

Discussion:

Dr Pavlich reported that his Office's proposal was prompted by feedback from researchers who have indicated that GFC Policy Manual Section 120/Subsections 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 hinder their ability to engage in commercialization and create spin-off companies and, also, that the outdated policies hinder research progress overall. The policies/procedures set out in GFC Policy Manual Section 120 do not appear to support *Dare to Deliver* and *Dare to Discover*. He continued that updated, relevant UAPPOL procedures are in place, rendering these older ones redundant.

A member requested clarification about subsection 120.5 as it relates to 'Conflict of Interest'. Dr Pavlich replied that there are current standards now that cover prior disclosure and that the older policy is more about limiting the capacity to create spin-off companies.

Dr Pavlich said the other subsections that remain with Section 120 will be 'UAPPOLized' as well and as soon as possible. Mr Bodnar added that it is not unusual for certain subsections of larger sections of the GFC Policy Manual to be rescinded while others remain 'on the books', awaiting further review and possible future rescission or conversion into the UAPPOL environment. He reminded members that the GFC Policy Manual is being decommissioned slowly in favour of having institutional academic and administrative policies and procedures housed in UAPPOL almost exclusively.

A member commented that a clear rationale for this proposal seems to be missing from the meeting material. Mr Bodnar stated that proposers are responsible for putting together the meeting material, including the completion of the prefacing Outline of Issue, but assistance is given to provide as much clarity as possible. He noted that, should any member be uncertain of the import of any item they are being asked to consider at an upcoming meeting, he would be happy to seek further clarification from the proposers. As a final note, Ms Haggarty-France added that many stakeholders within the University community continue to endeavor to make institutional policies and procedures current and transparent.

Motion: Molzahn/Kendal

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the rescission of Section 120 (University Community Relations)/Subsections 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the GFC Policy Manual, to take effect upon final approval.

CARRIED

7. 2013 – 2014 Academic Schedule

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Gerry Kendal, Vice-Provost and University Registrar; Anna Vocioni, Assistant Registrar (Examinations and Timetabling), Office of the Registrar

Purpose of the Proposal: To provide deadline dates for the 2013-2014 Academic Year.

Discussion:

Mr Kendal presented this annual item of business to members for final approval. He noted the purpose of the proposal before members was to formally establish deadline dates for the 2013–2014 Academic Year to be published in the 2013–2014 *University Calendar* (the dates of the Academic Schedule run from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014). He stated that drafts of this Academic Schedule had been circulated widely in

an electronic format to the University community for comment and, as necessary, correction. In turn, Mr Kendal quickly walked members through the documentation before them (including a briefing note that provided more detail on the construction of the proposed Academic Schedule, addressing concerns with this item raised by several members at the October, 2012 meeting of the GFC Executive Committee). Upon the conclusion of his brief presentation, Mr Kendal recommended that the GFC Executive Committee formally approve this item, citing undue duress to all individuals and academic units involved in the preparation process if further amendments were considered.

Mr Woods thanked Mr Kendal for his continued work on this proposal and stated that he supported it; however, he requested that changes to the exam schedule (as it relates to Easter weekend exams) in the future would be very popular with and beneficial for students. Mr Kendal replied that since Easter occurs on different dates from year to year, he will continue to do everything to accommodate such a request but, with that said, he could not guarantee any future changes.

Mr Chelen stated that the exams scheduled within the Easter long weekend remain an inconvenience to staff and students and added that he would not be voting in favor of the proposal. Mr Andrews stated that it is not reasonable to schedule exams during a religious weekend and asked about the possible impact of an increased amount of exam deferrals. He asked specifically if exam deferrals could be declined.

Mr Kendal explained that the proposed Academic Schedule had been widely circulated on two occasions to all interested stakeholders, including the student associations, and that exam deferral decisions rest within the Faculties. He clarified the details of two major changes to exam deferrals that had been made in the recent past including the elimination of a fee for such exams as well as its medical note requirement.

Dr Skidmore added that, although Easter long weekend exams may be viewed as burdensome for students and staff, it is not enough to merit the rescheduling of said exams, particularly when considering that normal academic activities occur on a range of other religious holy days.

A member asked how many students could potentially be affected, and Mr Kendall replied that approximately 2900 exam seats are prepared for these particular exams.

Motion: Skidmore/Rodgers

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the Academic Schedule for 2013-2014 (as submitted by the Vice-Provost and University Registrar and as set forth in Attachment 4) and, in doing so, empower the Registrar to make any editorial changes as needed as long as the changes do not have the force of policy, to be effective upon final approval.

CARRIED

8. Office of the Provost and Office of the Registrar – Proposed Changes to Current Withdrawal Deadlines

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Bill Connor, Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction); Ada Schmude, Associate Registrar (Enrolment Management), Office of the Registrar

Purpose of the Proposal: To consider the proposed changes to Withdrawal Deadlines for Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer Terms, as submitted by the Office of the Provost and the Office of the Registrar.

Discussion:

Dr Connor introduced this item to members by explaining that the University of Alberta's withdrawal deadlines tend to be quite early when compared to other major Canadian post-secondary institutions; he noted further that the University of Calgary's deadline, for example, is the last day of classes in a term. He indicated his hope was that, by extending the deadlines, students would have a greater chance to make strategic, intelligent decisions about course loads within the scope of their academic planning.

Members made note of several concerns and issues, including but not limited to: the inability faced by some students to rate their course performance before the current course withdrawal deadline because they lacked any marked term work; and the impact of this policy on students involved in group work.

Dr Connor summarized by stating that he does not foresee any major issues as a result of altering the withdrawal deadlines (as set out in the material before members) and that it will greatly benefit students.

Motion: Molzahn/de Gara

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, proposed changes to existing withdrawal deadlines in Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer Terms, as set forth in Attachment 1 and as submitted by the Offices of the Provost and the Registrar, to take effect in 2013-2014 and for publication in the 2013-2014 University Calendar (Section 11 (Academic Schedule)).

CARRIED

9. Draft Agenda for the November 26, 2012 Meeting of General Faculties Council (GFC)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Martin Ferguson-Pell, Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Acting Chair, GFC Executive Committee

Purpose of the Proposal: To approve the Agenda for the November 26, 2012 meeting of GFC.

Discussion:

Dr Ferguson-Pell outlined the draft Agenda item-by-item, noting that the President may be adding items for discussion. He added that those details are currently being worked out.

Members commented on a number of relevant points including but not limited to: the lack of items on the Agenda; the disadvantages of cancelling the next GFC meeting; and suggestions for the Agenda including updates about The Umbrella Committee (TUC) and possible impending changes to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR).

Based on the ensuing discussion, Mr Bodnar stated that he would add the item regarding the initiative associated with FGSR to the draft Agenda for January 21, 2013; the item regarding TUC would be added to the Agenda under review.

Motion: Kendal/de Gara

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the Agenda for the November 26, 2012 meeting of General Faculties Council (GFC).

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

10. University Governance Electronic Voting Procedure (e-Vote), Phase I

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Marion Haggarty-France, University Secretary; Garry Bodnar, Director of General Faculties Council (GFC) Services and Secretary to GFC; Ann Hodgson, Operations Manager, University Governance; Corey Chevraux, Information Technology (IT) Manager, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

Purpose of the Proposal: To provide a detailed report on the University Governance Electronic Voting Procedure (e-Vote), Phase I, with respect to product development and implementation and delivery plans; this includes a brief synopsis on the history and key drivers leading to the completion of e-Vote Phase I.

Discussion:

Ms Haggarty-France introduced the University Governance electronic voting procedure program to members, explaining that e-Vote will be a useful tool deployed in relation to a number of University Governance's activities, including committee population, nomination processes, and voting on contested elections where there are more nominees than available positions, and added that it is aligned with the relevant Cornerstones set out in the *Dare to Discover*.

Mr Bodnar explained that the current system of circulating paper ballots for voting purposes has been problematic, often resulting in limited participation and some difficulties in logistical details, including timely distribution. He stated that e-Vote solves these issues and provides a more eco-friendly option as well, as it is paperless.

Ms Hodgson continued by adding that e-Vote, as a tool, addresses several large processes within University Governance in one standardized approach which can be tailored to specific needs (routine or urgent) and distribution lists, in any timeframe. Those eligible to participate in the vote can simply log in to e-Vote and cast their vote accordingly. She stated that e-Vote is adaptable and interfaces with SharePoint, ensuring that data is live and current.

Mr Chevraux stated that one of his goals was to make e-Vote easy, secure, and useful for administrators. Committee members using e-Vote will not be required to install any software, and it can be used on any browser. It includes safety features that prevent misuses.

Ms Haggarty-France summarized by stating that e-Vote brings University Governance up to date with the latest technological capabilities around online voting and that making the transition from paper ballots to electronic voting is the most appropriate course of action for a multi-campus academy and a global community.

There was a very brief discussion following the presentation.

11. Question Period

There were no questions.

INFORMATION REPORTS

12. Items Approved by the GFC Executive Committee by E-Mail Ballots

There were no items.

13. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

14. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:30 pm.