



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council
Executive Committee
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, February 01, 2016
2-31 South Academic Building (SAB)
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Voting Members:

| | |
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| David Turpin | Chair, President |
| Sam Cheng | Member, Undergraduate Student At-large, Member of GFC |
| Lisa Collins | Member, Vice-Provost and University Registrar |
| Duncan Elliott | Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC |
| Paul Jurasz | Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC |
| Anita Molzahn | Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC |
| Steve Patten | Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC |
| Fahim Rahman | Member, Vice-President (Academic), Students' Union |
| Sean Robertson | Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC |
| Harsh Thaker | Member, Graduate Students' Association Vice-President (Academic) |
| Mirko van der Baan | Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC |
| Sheena Wilson | Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC |

Presenter(s):

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| David Turpin | President and Chair, GFC Executive Committee |
| Michael Peterson | Appeals and Compliance Officer, University Governance |
| Deborah Eerkes | Director, Student Conduct and Accountability |

Staff:

Meg Brolley, General Faculties Council (GFC) Secretary and Manager of GFC Services
Marion Haggarty-France, University Secretary
Andrea Patrick, Scribe

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Molzahn/van der Baan

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of January 11, 2016

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Robertson/Jurasz

THAT the GFC Executive approve the Minutes of January 11, 2016.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair

The Chair provided commentary on the positive level of engagement at the GFC meeting of January 25, 2016.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. Office of Student Judicial Affairs (OSJA) 2014/2015 Annual Report and Statistics

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting files.

Presenter: Deborah Eerkes, Director, Student Conduct and Accountability

Purpose of the Proposal: To provide the GFC Executive Committee with the annual report and statistics of the OSJA for the 2014/15 academic year.

Discussion:

Ms Eerkes noted that the name of her office had changed to Student Conduct and Accountability. She provided members with highlights from the Annual Report, noting that between the period of July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015, Discipline Officers rendered 44 discipline decisions, resulting in various sanctions ranging from expulsions to orders of restitution. She noted that there were more serious cases as reflected by the numbers of expulsions and suspensions. Mr Eerkes further noted that there were more cases with Ombuds or lawyer involvement; this led to an increase amount of time spent per case. She reported that a typical case can take approximately ten hours, and the more complicated ones can be up to 100 hours.

Ms Eerkes reported that the restorative justice model at the residences seems to be providing more resolutions which do not end up at her office. She also noted a drop in alcohol-fueled misconduct.

During the discussion in regards to the Report, a member sought further information on sexual assaults on campus and suggested that more needs to be done both in terms of tracking assaults as well as providing education to instructors and faculty members on how to respond to students who may have been sexually assaulted. Ms Eerkes noted that one of the bigger issues in tracking the data is that a lot of assaults do not get formally reported, and that the Review of the University of Alberta's Response to Sexual Assault would contain recommendations.

In relation to a member's question about different ways students may report sexual assaults, Ms Eerkes clarified that students may report them to Protective Services (violation of the Code of Student Behaviour) or through the police (criminal process). Ms Eerkes clarified that her office is not involved in the criminal process and that the two processes occur separately.

A member enquired about the length of time files are open within Student Conduct and Accountability, and Ms Eerkes clarified that it depends on how complicated the offence is, if lawyers are involved, and whether the charges are contested. She noted that a typical case is about 6 weeks, with a range of 2 weeks to 6 months.

Members discussed recent trends in the use of electronic devices for cheating in examinations. There was also a discussion on the sanctions of exam failure versus suspension and consistency of sanctions across campus.

The Report will be placed on the GFC Agenda as an information item.

5. Annual Report of the Appeals and Compliance Officer 2014/2015

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting files.

Presenter: Michael Peterson, Appeals and Compliance Officer, University Governance

Purpose of the Proposal: As mandated by GFC, to provide an annual report of discipline and appeal statistics.

Discussion:

Mr Peterson provided an overview of his role as Appeals and Compliance Officer. He noted that in his role, he is a neutral party who facilitates and administers the appeal process from the time an appeal is received, to the end of the hearing and the distribution of the written decision. He reported that he oversees the University's appeal system to ensure that it is an administratively fair process including the training of panel members on the process.

He reported that the university-level appeal system is comprised of three bodies: the University Appeal Board (UAB), the GFC Academic Appeals Committee (GFC AAC) and the GFC Practice Review Board (GFC PRB). He noted that these appeal processes are the final level of appeal, subject to judicial review. He stated that the process contains written information, written arguments, and a hearing, and is set up to ensure that everyone in the process has a chance to be heard.

He reported that panel members are trained in administrative fairness and processes, as well as applicable policy frameworks. He noted that these members work long hours and make a lot of tough decisions and that their dedicated service to the community is valued.

Mr Peterson reported that the Report reflects a yearly increase in the number of appeals received over the last five years. He noted that the two main offenses are plagiarism and cheating. He also reported that there has been an increase in non-academic appeals, as well, both in numbers as well as complexity. He added that although legal representation is not the norm at this point, it is increasing, especially in cases where suspensions or expulsions are involved; he further noted that these cases take longer. He acknowledged that the recent addition of an Administrative Assistant to work with the appeals has been very beneficial.

In response to a question about the number of cases in each Faculty, Mr Peterson explained that this would be influenced by the size of the Faculty, the number of students, particularly first year students, and that some Faculties have no appeals in some years.

The Report will be placed on the GFC Agenda as an information item.

6. Institutional Strategic Plan – Update

There were no documents.

Presenter: David Turpin, President and Chair, GFC Executive Committee

Purpose of the Proposal: For information/discussion.

Discussion:

The Chair provided an update to members on the institutional strategic plan, adding that he recently attended a round table and forum at Augustana Faculty. He noted that the Institutional Strategic Planning Advisory Committee has endeavored to structure themes from the material gathered during the consultation process (including electronic submissions), and that a draft document will be prepared sometime in early March.

7. Academic Governance at the University of Alberta – Next Steps

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: David Turpin, President and Chair, GFC Executive Committee

Purpose of the Proposal: For information/discussion.

Discussion:

The Chair introduced the topic by noting the memorandum from GFC Secretary Meg Brolley regarding academic governance and next steps towards further action and discussion at GFC. He noted that there was a broad and engaging discussion on this topic at the GFC meeting of January 25, 2016, and invited members to provide comments on that discussion.

Members, during the extensive discussion surrounding this item, expressed satisfaction with the level of collegiality and engagement at the GFC meeting, acknowledged the absence of antagonistic comments, and noted that certain recommendations from members seem easy to adopt. Although one member noted that the discussion could have been more structured, it was the consensus of members that the discussion was positive.

Members also commented that Motions proposed at the meeting, including the Chair's openness and willingness to amend the Agenda, provided an open, encouraging environment in a group that has expressed frustration with recent procedural issues at GFC, most importantly the inability to vote on the Peter Lougheed Leadership College.

A member noted that the comments surrounding collegial governance as cultural was compelling, and suggested that Faculties, within their decision-making bodies, must also maintain and encourage such collegiality.

The Chair echoed these sentiments and invited members to suggest ways to move forward with action items, noting that open discussions are part of the solution and that big changes might not be necessarily required.

A member made note that GFC did not provide concrete next steps.

The committee discussed proposed next steps. In relation to enhancing communication and meeting logistics, Ms Brolley noted that the availability of name cards, revision of the sign-in sheet, and improved dissemination of meeting materials could be possible solutions to concerns raised. Members discussed these suggestions at length. A member noted that allowing GFC members to have full access to committee materials empowers all, but that there is a great deal of existing transparency, and that all GFC

Standing Committee meetings are open. In response, a member noted that people within the community feel removed from Central Administration overall, and that efforts to make business more public might help to ameliorate this.

The Chair added that Committee Work Plans could be created and made available to members periodically throughout the year to give GFC members a sense of items being developed. A member suggested regular reminders about Committee meetings, and that a specific GOV 101 training session for new members would also be beneficial. In addition, he suggested providing more clarity surrounding which meetings are open. A member encouraged Committee members to consider having one GFC meeting outside of the normal meeting time and date, to see if participation increases.

There was a discussion on posting meeting materials on the University Governance website and what remains on that website. It was noted that documents on all decision items remain on the website, but discussion items are removed. The committee discussed the challenges involved in leaving materials in development stages on the website in perpetuity rather than maintaining final documents only.

Regarding principles of academic governance, Ms Brolley suggested that a guiding document could be drafted for further discussion and endorsement at GFC. A member noted that this discussion, in particular, should not be informed by just the Student Unions' (SU) Discussion Paper on Academic Governance. In response, a member pointed out that some members of GFC identified with the recommendations within that document.

Regarding delegations, Ms Brolley noted that GFC has delegated authority not only to its Standing Committees, but to other bodies, and individuals. She also noted that the Board of Governors has also made delegations to GFC standing committees. A member stated that the delegation documentation was helpful; but further noted that, in regards to principles, there should be some way to identify how GFC can be more strategic and valuable to the academy. He went on to explain that completely de-delegating authority may not be an appropriate solution to this problem, but that ensuring that GFC is afforded an opportunity to discuss the strategic and important issues does address this.

The Chair stated that the governance system allows Chairs of Standing Committees to bring issues forward to full GFC for consultation. Members noted that this would not be utilized often, but could be extended, for example, to include the vetting process for the Comprehensive Institutional Plan (CIP), where GFC could be asked to discuss it before GFC Academic Planning Committee exercised its delegated authority to recommend it to the Board of Governors.

A member sought clarification regarding the GFC Nominating Committee, in terms of considering individuals for membership on GFC's Standing Committees. Ms Brolley confirmed that some GFC Standing Committees include members at large, and that GFC membership is not a requirement in all cases. A member noted the significance of being elected by colleagues within a Faculty to represent them at GFC.

The Chair requested that members identify next steps; specifically, how this work will be completed, and by what sort of body.

Members suggested creating a subcommittee of GFC Executive, which could meet and bring back ideas in a timely manner. The Chair noted that discussions at the May 30 GFC meeting might occur after students have left campus.

A member, in support of the proposed timeline provided, suggested creating a working group to review communication, logistics, delegations, principles and the role of GFC. On this point, the Chair noted that this process allows GFC a chance to renew and refresh on an ongoing basis.

A member explained that perhaps the real issue is that GFC wants to be engaged in strategic discussions and decision-making on campus, and that perhaps delegation is not the core issue.

Members discussed composition of the working group, with some members supporting the inclusion of non-GFC members, and others advocating for exclusive GFC membership, citing the lack of time to provide external members with training.

Members discussed the need to schedule an extra GFC meeting before the end of the academic year. The Chair suggested May 2, 2016.

In relation to the order of implementing this strategy, a member suggested that communicating back to GFC members on activities is an important element in gaining their trust and proving that their concerns are being addressed.

The Chair suggested that the communication issues should be tackled first, followed by a review of principles, which could then guide the discussion surrounding delegation.

A member noted that perhaps addressing certain controversial topics might be helpful and in response, the Chair acknowledged that the Peter Lougheed Leadership College could be discussed. A member also suggested that the discussion on delegations include all the delegations. A member, in response, pointed out that Motion I limits review of Standing Committees only.

The Chair thanked members for their advice, and stated that the preliminary work will begin immediately.

8. Question Period

Undergraduate student member Mr Sam Cheng noted that this would be his last meeting, as he is relocating to Red Deer to complete his Education practicum. He thanked members for their collegiality, adding that he learned a great deal during his time on the Committee.

INFORMATION REPORTS

9. Items Approved by the GFC Executive Committee by e-mail Ballots

There were no items.

10. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

11. Adjournment

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