
General Faculties Council
Programs Committee (PC)
Approved Open Session Minutes

Thursday, September 15, 2022
South Academic Building (SAB) 2-31
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Janice Causgrove Dunn, Chair
Jennifer Branch-Mueller
Florence Glanfield
Anna Hughes
Gurleen Kaur
Stacy Lorenz
Brooke Milne
Heather Seyl Miyashita
Adekunle Mofolasayo
Hanne Pearce

Sujata Persad
Sean Robertson
Maite Snauwaert
Monisha Vinod (delegate)
Aman Ullah
non-voting:
Brian Pardell
Kate Peters (Scribe)
Remonia Stoddart-Morrison

REGRETS:

Tahmid Al Hafiz
Brad Hamdon
Helen Vallianatos

Staff:

Heather Richholt, Coordinator

OPENING SESSION

The Chair began with a territorial acknowledgment:

The University of Alberta is located on Treaty 6 territory, and respects the histories, languages, and cultures of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Janice Causgrove Dunn, Vice-Provost (Programs) and Chair PC

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC Programs Committee approve the agenda.

CARRIED

2. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

Presenter(s): Janice Causgrove Dunn, Vice-Provost (Programs) and Chair PC

The Chair led a roundtable of introductions.

3. GFC Committee Orientation

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Kate Peters, Secretary to GFC; Heather Richholt, Associate Secretary to GFC

Discussion:

Members discussed the authority of the committee, their role in implementing the Indigenous Strategic Plan, and limitations to their authority. Members asked about the history of the committee.

CONSENT AGENDA

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

The motion to approve the Consent Agenda was moved and seconded.

4. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of June 23, 2022

THAT the GFC Programs Committee approve the open session minutes of June 22, 2022

CARRIED

5. Course and Minor Program Changes

- Arts
- Business
- Education
- Medicine and Dentistry
- Native Studies
- Nursing
- Science

THAT the GFC Programs Committee approve, with delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the attached course and minor program change submissions from the Faculties of Arts, Business, Education, Medicine and Dentistry, Native Studies, Nursing, and Science.

CARRIED

ACTION ITEMS

6. Proposed Revision to the Exploration Credits Policy

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Anna Hughes, Associate Registrar

Discussion:

The Chair reminded members about their June 22, 2022 conversation to clarify the authority of GFC over exclusions to the policy. The Proponent described the proposed changes. It was noted that the approval path for changes to exclude courses from the Exploration credits policy was Faculty Council, Program Support Team, and Programs Committee who will approve with delegated authority from GFC.

Members discussed the proposal and what might be acceptable rationales for exceptions. The policy itself includes several boundaries for what exceptions may be acceptable. It was clarified that Faculties wanting to exclude courses will still need to provide rationale.

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC Programs Committee recommend that General Faculties Council approve the revision to the Calendar language for the Exploration Credit Policy as set forth in attachment 1 to take effect upon approval.

CARRIED

7. Duolingo English Test: Recalibration of Test Scores

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Jane Lee, Acting Associate Registrar, Brooke Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research.

Discussion:

The proponents thanked the Programs Committee for their willingness to accept this last minute item. They explained that the Committee was asked to consider an increase in the threshold for eligibility for English Language Proficiency based on Duolingo's own recalibration and made the case that the change was in the best interest of students.

Members discussed the history of the use of Duolingo and the relevance of the test in the current pandemic situation. The extension of the use of the test was approved by GFC in 2021 and is currently in effect. The decision before the committee was clarified as being the change to the thresholds. The committee discussed the balance between ensuring that students were set up for success and putting up barriers to admission. The experience of use of Duolingo was shared as being beneficial to students because of the ease of access and low cost. Members also shared concerns that English Language Proficiency of students admitted using the Duolingo test was not equivalent.

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT GFC Programs Committee approve the recalibration of the Duolingo English Test (DET) score thresholds for the Fall 2023/Winter 2024 admissions for undergraduate and graduate applicants.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

8. Aboriginal to Indigenous Wording Change in the University Calendar

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Anna Hughes, Associate Registrar

Discussion:

Members were invited to review the Indigenous Strategic Plan which uses the term Indigenous to be more inclusive to first peoples. This is also in alignment with the use of the term by the United Nations. The Faculty of Education is reviewing their *Calendar* section and will be undertaking these changes separately. Committee members asked for clarification on what they were asked to do and it was clarified that the change was before the committee for discussion. F Glanfield noted that it was possible that the term would change in the future and that the Constitution uses the term "aboriginal" so the use of that term will continue. Members asked whether it was appropriate to change these documents to align with the Institutional direction and heard that changes are context specific and it would be appropriate to inform local governance bodies of the changes.

9. Recommendations from the Embedded Certificate Working Group and Next Steps

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Janice Causgrove Dunn, Vice-Provost (Programs) and Chair PC

Discussion:

The Chair explained the background and rationale for the proposal and provided the data collected during an Environmental Scan. The findings include the description of practices from other institutions and analysis on the broad range of structures, formats and target student audiences for embedded certificates at the University of Alberta. Undergraduate Embedded certificates vary widely in terms of how narrow or broad (interdisciplinary) the topics are and in the number of graduates

from 2017-2021. The most popular certificates have broad topics, are accessible to learners from multiple programs, require 12-18 credits, and include an “experience” (e.g., intercultural experience, research project). Data from a recent survey of graduates who received an embedded certificate shows that students are often awarded more than one embedded certificate, that course instructors are the primary source of introduction to the opportunities, and 29% of respondents noted there were either no additional requirements or only a small number of additional requirements to complete the certificate over and above their degree requirements.

The Chair reported that as a result of this work, design principles for undergraduate embedded certificates were discussed and included interdisciplinarity, accessibility, sustainability, strategic alignment, student demand, Indigenization and thoughtful program design. The recommendations of the working group include the need to narrow the range of credit value, streamlining the registration process for students, and reconsidering the design of parchments and recognition at convocation.

Members asked about how embedded certificates are created and how students navigate the requirements. Members discussed the difference between embedded certificates and minors. The need to define the term interdisciplinary and consideration of terminology including cross and transdisciplinarity was discussed by the Committee. Members questioned how accessibility would be defined and asked whether graduate embedded certificates also receive a separate parchment at convocation. Members questioned the value of awarding additional credentials to students who have already received credit for the embedded certificate courses toward their degree requirements. Members expressed support for the work to create a framework for embedded certificate development and communicate principles and guidelines, and asked about the possibility of an outcome study to further guide the framework. Finally, the committee discussed the importance of differentiating between micro credentials, badges, embedded and free standing certificates in terms of the value add for students and outcomes.

10. External Programs for Review and Programs in Progress on Campus: Standing Item (no documents)

Presenter(s): Carley Roth, Portfolio Initiative Manager

C Roth provided the following update:

We are in the process of reviewing two new external program proposals, both of which are from the University of Calgary: a new Master of Quantum Computing, and a new Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics.

The new Bachelor of Biomedicine has been submitted to the Ministry.

Since our last meeting in June, the Ministry has approved: Two name changes of first-level specializations under the Bachelor of Science: Immunology TO Immunology and Infection, and Mathematics/Economics TO Mathematics and Economics; and Two terminations: Graduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, and ALES first-level specialization under the Master of Engineering.

11. Question Period

There were no questions.

INFORMATION REPORTS

12. Faculty of Native Studies New Continuing Education Courses

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Discussion:

Members were informed that Item 12 had been included for information and non-credit courses and microcredentials that are not attached to a larger program are approved by the Faculty or the Provost.

CLOSING SESSION

13. Adjournment
 - Next Meeting of PC: October 13, 2022
 - Next Meeting of GFC: September 19, 2022