



General Faculties Council
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, January 30, 2012
2-1, UHALL, Council Chamber
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Samarasekera, Indira	President (Chair)
Adolphson, Mikael	Arts
Agrawal, Rahul	Graduate Student at-Large
Amrhein, Carl	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Andrews, Nathan	Graduate Student at-Large
Arbuckle, Kathryn	Library Academic Staff
Ashworth, Nigel	Medicine and Dentistry
Beckie, Mark	Extension
Blackburn, Ed	Saint-Jean
Bouchard, Alice	Nominated by NASA
Brown, Cary	Rehabilitation Medicine
Bryden, Philip	Dean, Law
Campenot, Robert	AASUA Appointee to the Board of Governors
Cherry, Nicola	Medicine and Dentistry
Clair, Joanne	Sessional Staff
Clark, Brenda	Medicine and Dentistry
Clark, Phyllis	Vice-President (Finance and Administration)
Cormack, Lesley	Dean, Arts
Coulthard, Roy	GSA President
Crone, Lyndon	Engineering
Csorba, Emerson	Student Nominated by Undergraduate Council of Students
D'Agostini, Stephanie	Science
De Gara, Chris	Medicine and Dentistry
Eccles, Russell	Nominated by NASA
Elio, Renée (Delegate)	Vice-President (Research)
Elves, Erika Anne	Graduate Student at-Large
Farnel, Sharon	Library Academic Staff
Fortin, Raphael Lepage	SU Appointee to the Board of Governors
Frishkopf, Michael	Arts
Gellatly, Ian	Business
Gordon, Ann	Arts
Harrington, Joanna	Law
Hetman, Tracy	APO
Hickey, Don	Vice-President (Facilities and Operations)
Ingles, Ernie	Vice-Provost (Learning Services) and Interim Director, Library and Information Studies
Jensen, Louise	Nursing
Kalantzis, Nikolas	Arts
Kehrer, James	Dean, Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Kendal, Gerry	Vice-Provost and University Registrar
Kennelly, John	Dean, Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences
Kermoal, Nathalie	Interim Dean, Native Studies
Konkin, Jill	Medicine and Dentistry

Kusmu, Petros	Arts
L'Abbe, Thomas	Science
Lemelin, Pierre	Medicine and Dentistry
Lemire, Bernard	Medicine and Dentistry
Liu, Lili	Chair of Chairs' Council
Livingstone, Lee	Arts
Lowary, Todd	Science
Luchak, Andrew	Business
Lunawat, Sagar	Graduate Student at-Large
Luth, Bob	Science
MacFarlane, Kelly	Sessional Staff
Markula, Pirkko	Physical Education and Recreation
Martelle, Tanya	NASA Appointee to the Board of Governors
McCormack, Patricia	Native Studies
Meston, John	Graduate Student at-Large
Milner, Rachel	Medicine and Dentistry
Moghaddan, Nima Yousefi	Student Nominated by Graduate Council of Students
Molzahn, Anita	Dean, Nursing
Monfries, Nicholas	Science
Mostafa, Nesrine	Graduate Student at-Large
Mummery, Kerry	Dean, Physical Education & Recreation
Nelson Amaral, J Nelson	Science
Nicol, Scott	Law
Outar, O'Neil	Chief Advancement Officer
Pozega Osburn, Debra	Vice-President (University Relations)
Rathbone, Andy	Graduate Student at-Large
Richards, Jeremy	Science
Rinaldi, Christina	Education
Robinson, Robinson	Vice-Provost and Dean of Students
Rogers, Christopher	Engineering
Romaniuk, Mary-Jo	Acting Chief Librarian
Rosychuk, Rhonda	Medicine and Dentistry
Saunders, Duncan	Public Health
Shirvani, Mazi	Vice-Provost and Dean, Graduate Studies and Research
Sturdy, Christopher	Science
Sumar, Saadiq	Engineering
Tighe, Rory	Students' Union President
Tinic, Serra	Arts
Tremblay, Gabriel	Arts
Uwiera, Richard	FSO
Velji, Alkarim	Medicine and Dentistry
Williamson, Deanna	Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences
Yamagishi, Colten	Student Nominated by Undergraduate Council of Students
Yiu, Verna	Interim Dean, Medicine and Dentistry
Zeng, Minhao	Graduate Student at-Large
Zhang, Hao	Engineering
Zielinski, Michal	Graduate Student at-Large

Presenter(s):

Amrhein, Carl	Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair, GFC Executive Committee
Blackburn, Ed	Chair, GFC Nominating Committee
Bodnar, Garry	Secretary to General Faculties Council and Coordinator, GFC Replenishment Committee
Fowler, Kris	Helping Individuals at Risk Coordinator
King, Wade	Safe Disclosure and Human Rights Advisor
Persson, Mary	Associate Vice-President (Audit and Analysis)
Samarasekera, Indira	President and Chair, General Faculties Council

Staff:

Bodnar, Garry
Paulsen, Emily

Secretary to General Faculties Council
Scribe

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Amaral/MacFarlane

THAT the General Faculties Council approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of November 28, 2011

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Amaral/Molzahn

THAT the General Faculties Council approve the Minutes of November 28, 2011.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair

President Samarasekera provided comments on the Provincial economy which will be facing potential future labour shortages that may limit, in turn, the pace of economic growth. The President noted there are considerable opportunities for the University of Alberta to work with the Provincial Government to build on the existing energy economy, to assist in the diversification of markets globally, to cultivate a dynamic innovative workforce, and to assist in the strengthening of local, regional, and provincial communities.

The President spoke to the Edmonton Clinic Health Academy (ECHA) opening event held on January 18, 2012 during which Premier Alison Redford spoke very positively about the University's role in supporting the Province of Alberta.

Dr Samarasekera also made mention of the University's Comprehensive Institutional Plan (CIP), which includes the University's consolidated budget and serves to set the tone for Provincial Government investment. The latest iteration of the CIP, she indicated, will soon be working through its formal legislative process.

The President provided detail on how she, along with the Presidents of the other 'U15' institutions (ie, the University of Alberta's peers in Canadian post-secondary education), had recently met with the Prime Minister. She said that he seemed pleased with the role universities play in Canada and seemed understanding of the challenges these institutions are currently facing.

ACTION ITEMS

4. New Members of GFC

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Indira Samarasekera, President and Chair, General Faculties Council

Discussion:

There was no discussion.

Motion I: There were no new members to be appointed by GFC.

Motion II: TO RECEIVE (Shirvani/Molzahn)

The following *ex officio* member to serve on GFC for a term beginning January 1, 2012 and extending for the duration of the Interim Deanship:

Joseph Doucet

Interim Dean, Faculty of Business

The following *ex officio* member to serve on GFC for a term beginning July 1, 2012 and extending for the duration of his Deanship:

Brendan Hokowhitu

Incoming Dean, Faculty of Native Studies

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5. Report from the President on the Provincial Climate for Post-Secondary Education

There were no documents.

Presenter: Indira Samarasekera, President and Chair, General Faculties Council

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:

Dr Samarasekera chose to discuss this item during 'Question Period' since this and her response to one of the written questions submitted by a member were related in content matter.

6. Helping Individuals at Risk and Safe Disclosure and Human Rights Activity Report 2010-2011

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Mary Persson, Associate Vice-President (Audit and Analysis); Wade King, Safe Disclosure and Human Rights Advisor; Kris Fowler, Helping Individuals at Risk Coordinator

Purpose of the Proposal: To file an annual report with General Faculties Council.

Discussion:

Ms Persson, Mr King, and Ms Fowler presented to members the *2010-2011 Activity Report: Helping*

Individuals at Risk (HIAR) and Safe Disclosure and Human Rights (SDHR). Ms Persson stated the purpose of this report, to be filed annually with GFC for its information, is to provide the University community with a comprehensive update on the activities of HIAR and SDHR and provide information on trends and strategies for dealing with them.

At the request of a member, Ms Persson clarified the content of one of the graphs contained in the document before GFC. In response to a member's query, Ms Persson noted that on those occasions when there was no obvious place for a referral to go, Mr King would undertake the resolution process.

7. Question Period

7.1Q/7.1R Question from GFC Undergraduate Student Member Saadiq Sumar Regarding Residence Planning and Student Engagement at the University of Alberta and Responses to Mr Sumar's Question from the Vice-President (Facilities and Operations) and from the Dean of Students

Mr Sumar had no additional questions.

7.2Q Question from Professor Jeremy Richards, Faculty of Science Representative on GFC, Regarding the Numerical Value of the University's Grades of A and A+

7.2R Response from Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) Bill Connor to Professor Richards' Question

Professor Richards voiced concern that the answer provided was a literal response that did not address the underlying nature of the question. Dr Amrhein responded that the institution does not want to over-reward students on the current 4.0 grading scale and added that, at the present time, this issue is not on a 'must-review list'. Professor Richards asked if it would be appropriate to make a Motion to the effect that GFC would like this matter further investigated; the Secretary to GFC indicated that posing a Motion during 'Question Period' in response to the written response provided to a member's written question was contrary to GFC's own procedural rules and, hence, inappropriate. Dr Amrhein suggested this issue could be referred, in the first instance, to the Provost's Academic Policy and Process Review Task Force (APPRTF) if members felt that it needed to be further addressed. [Subsequent to the meeting, the Provost committed to taking this issue to the APPRTF for further discussion.]

7.3Q Questions from GFC Undergraduate Student Member Scott Nicol Regarding Posting of Sexual Assault Awareness Posters and Relevant Policies Regarding Such Postings at the University of Alberta

7.3R Responses from the Administration to Mr Nicol's Questions

Dr Amrhein told members that a formal response had not yet been produced as the Office of the Dean of Students, charged with formulating that response, had been congested with work and there was a desire to answer the question comprehensively. Vice-Provost and Dean of Students Frank Robinson stated he would be working on the response to Mr Nicol's questions and that this response would be available for members at GFC's next meeting, to be held on March 19, 2012.

7.4Q Question from GFC Undergraduate Student Member Scott Nicol Regarding Counselling Services for Students at the University of Alberta

7.4R Response from the Administration to Mr Nicol's Question

Vice-Provost and Dean of Students Frank Robinson apologized for a lack of a response to Mr Nicol's question at this time. He explained that there is widespread concern about increasing problems and stigmas around mental illness. He stated he would be working on a response to Mr Nicol's questions and that this response would be available for members at GFC's next meeting, to be held on March 19, 2012.

7.5Q Questions from Professor Nelson Amaral, Faculty of Science Representative on GFC, Regarding Clarification of the President's Views on the State of the University's Budget

7.5R Responses from the President to Professor Amaral's Questions

Both in response to the written questions posed by Professor Amaral and as part of the presentation she intended for Agenda Item #5, Dr Samarasekera provided members with a detailed presentation on the Provincial climate for post-secondary education. During the course of this presentation, the President explained that the University has been positioning itself as an institution that deserves visionary funding if the Province of Alberta is going to thrive. She noted that she and her executive 'team' have made the strategic choice to have direct conversations with the Provincial Government on this and related issues rather than to conduct any type of campaign through the media. She added that negative advocacy has negative consequences and rarely works. She stated that she is of the strong belief that thoughtful arguments backed with solid, irrefutable data are the most effective strategy. She spoke briefly to a recent past institutional campaign of positive advocacy—the 'I Love Alberta Universities' campaign—that had had resultant positive impacts on the University.

Dr Samarasekera continued by speaking to the long-term vision for the University of Alberta and the institution's commitment to high-quality education. She acknowledged that the past three years with no new investment have been difficult to accommodate and that, as result, there have been budget reallocations. In addition, the President emphasized the collective desire to both minimize and mitigate the impact of low rates of investment on students; the need to continue to work on student wellness factors; the considerable institutional investment in information technology (and the benefits derived therefrom); and the continuing investment in the University's library system, one of the best-ranked quality post-secondary libraries in the North America.

Members shared comments, ideas, and concerns, which included: encouraging an approach that involves more public discussion; the representation of the worsening faculty/student ratio in the President's presentation; the provision of University anecdotes and stories that serve to go beyond facts and data in order to more greatly resonate with listeners; the limited time available to consult with Government officials on institutional priorities and challenges; and celebrating the achievements of the University of Alberta to showcase the institution's successes.

7.6Q/7.6R Question from Professor Nelson Amaral, Faculty of Science Representative on GFC, Regarding the Status of Varsity Field and Response to Professor Amaral's Question from the Vice-President (Facilities and Operations)

Professor Amaral thanked the Vice-President (Facilities and Operations) for his response and noted that he would look forward to the time Varsity Field was no longer used as a parking facility.

After discussion of the written questions was finished, Mr Tighe queried whether or not there had been a review recently of governance at the University. He suggested that there be better communication about the processes involved with institutional governance to the wider University community. Dr Amrhein noted that internal communication continues to be an issue.

INFORMATION REPORTS

8. GFC Executive Committee Minutes of November 7 and December 5, 2011

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

There was no discussion.

9. Report of the Board of Governors of December 9, 2011

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

There was no discussion.

10. E-Mail Report of the GFC Nominating Committee (December 12, 2011)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Professor Ed Blackburn, Chair, GFC Nominating Committee, made mention of several important upcoming deadlines regarding the annual replenishment of GFC standing committees and bodies to which GFC elects members.

11. E-Mail Report of the GFC Replenishment Committee

There were no reports.

12. Information Items Forwarded to GFC Members Between Meetings

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

AB [Alberta] Budget Dialogue - Note from the President of the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) (E-Mailed to Members on December 5, 2011)

13. Reports

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Annual Report to General Faculties Council (GFC) from the Appeals Coordinator (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2011)

General Appeals Committee (GAC) Annual Report to General Faculties Council (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011)

There was no discussion.

CLOSING SESSION

14. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:30pm.