



General Faculties Council
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, March 19, 2018
Council Chamber, 2-100 University Hall (UNH)
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Statutory Members:

Ex-Officio:

David Turpin, Chair
Chris Andersen
Stanford Blade
Katy Campbell
Lisa Collins
Lesley Cormack
Greta Cummings
Steven Dew
Walter Dixon
Kathleen DeLong
Gitta Kulczycki
Paul Paton
Jonathan Schaeffer
Andrew Sharman
Jacqui Tam
Jennifer Tupper
Kue Young
Heather Zwicker

Elected Faculty:

Susan Andrew
Peter Carver
Ryan Dunch
Duncan Elliot
Nadir Erbilgin
Murray Gingras
Eva Lemaire
Pierre Lemelin
Mark Loewen
Lisa McDermott
Rob McMahan
Al Meldrum
Alice Nakamura
Carla Peck
Carolyn Sale
Marc Secanell
John Seubert
Carrie Smith-Prei
Sarah Stahlke
Brent Swallow

Dilini Vethanayagam

Akiko Watanabe

Jonathan White

Ian Winship

Students:

Shane Scott

Ilya Ushakov

Appointed Members:

Joel Agarwal

Erin Allin

Matthew Barnett

Robert Bilak

Michelle Borowitz

Heather Bruce

Meijun Chen

Darren Choi

Pamela Mayne Correia

Heidi Cossey

Shannon Erichsen

Shawn Flynn

Kyle Foster

Gautam Gaur

Connor Hastey Palindat

Irehobhude Iyioha

Maryse Ndilu Kiese

Marina Kirillovich

Wei Liu

Habba Mahal

Kyle Monda

Sean Oliver

Michael Sandare

Babak Soltannia

Andrews Tawiah

Amanda Wakaruk

Janet Williamson

Brandon Yip

REGRETS:

Jason Acker

Solomon Amoateng

Alizeh Ansari

Daniel Atchison

Marina Banister

Darcy Bemister

Allen Berger

Daniel Bilyk

Katherine Binhammer

Jeff Birchall

Linzy Bohn

Abigail Bridarolli

Cary Brown

Sylvia Brown

Erica Chang

Li-Kwong Cheah

Brandon Christensen

David Cooper

André Costopoulos

Neal Davies

Benjamin Denga

Genna DiPinto

Joseph Doucet

Jonah Dunch

Tarek El-Bialy

Dean Eurich

Fraser Forbes

Bill Foster

Kim Frail

Adam Gaudry

Robert Haennel

Daanish Hamid

Lesley Harrington

Osman Hojanepesov

Delane Howie

Gohar Jamal

Gaganpreet Jhajj

Maryam Kebbe

Mahmoud Kenawi

Firouz Khodayari

Dennis Kunimoto

Alex Kwan

Amy Li

Leijun Li

Monica Lillo

Steven Lin

Godfrey Man

Heather McCaw

Lynn McMullen

Laurie Mereu

Pierre-Yves Mocquais

Roger Moore

Kerry Mummery

Vivian Mushahwar

Aleks Nakevski

Anthony Nguyen

Smit Patel

Leonard Ratzlaff

Georg Schmolzer

Kim Solez

Jorge Sousa

Lisa Stein

Eleni Stroulia

Bruce Sutherland

James Thibaudeau

Amy Tse

Benjamin Tucker

LJ Valencia

Eddie Wang

Bonnie Watt

Brayden Whitlock

Erin Wright

Ziyu Yang

Kue Young

STAFF:

Meg Brolley, GFC

Secretary

Marion Haggarty-

France, University

Secretary

Heather Richholt,

scribe

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

The Chair noted that a member had asked for a motion to be added to the agenda and that this motion was circulated to members before the meeting.

Motion: Vethanayagam/Tupper

THAT General Faculties Council approve the addition of the motion on "Clean Air Strategy" to the Agenda.

CARRIED

The Chair indicated that Clean Air Strategy will be included on the Agenda as Item 5.

Motion: Cormack/Vethanayagam

THAT General Faculties Council approve the Agenda as amended.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Minutes of February 26, 2018

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Zwicker/Dew

THAT General Faculties Council approve the Minutes of February 26, 2018.

CARRIED

3. Report from the President

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

The Chair announced the appointment of Bob Haennel as Dean of the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine.

The Chair mentioned the recent federal budget and noted that the second largest funding increase in the history of the funding councils. He noted that the provincial budget was due to be released later in the week.

The Chair mentioned the recent provincial government announcement about university status for Red Deer College, Grande Prairie Regional College (details yet to be defined) and Alberta College of Art and Design which currently holds degree granting status.

The Chair indicated that the Board had approved the 2018-19 budget at its March 19 meeting. He then presented an overview of the approved budget. He noted the challenges of the structural deficit, the limited flexibility within the budget, tuition comparisons with other U15 institutions, and the requirement for cost recovery in ancillary services including residences and meal plans. In response to a member's question, the Chair noted that 58% of the university's operating revenue comes from the provincial government and less than 1% comes from the federal government.

The Chair asked Brad Hamdon, University Counsel, to give a brief update on Bill 27. Mr Hamdon noted that work is underway with draft documents to be submitted to the Ethics Commissioner for review by April 30th. He noted that these documents will come to GFC at the April 30th meeting for information and final documents will come back to GFC in the fall for approval.

The Chair congratulated the successful candidates of the Students' Union and Graduate Students' Association executive elections earlier this month.

The Chair also noted that the university's response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report will be on the agenda for discussion at the April 30th GFC meeting.

EARLY CONSULTATION

4. The Cannabis Act and the University of Alberta

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Andrew Leitch, Director, ERM Programs, Risk Management Services; Kevin Friese, Assistant Dean, Health and Wellness, Office of the Dean of Students

Discussion:

The Chair noted that the upcoming legalization of cannabis will have several implications for the university and that a working group had been established to develop recommendations to inform university policy development.

The presenters noted that they are currently surveying the university community as well as looking at policies in other cities and universities. They noted that a town hall was held the previous week with about 190 people attending; they also noted that there has been strong response to the online survey. They confirmed that the results of the survey will be made public as will a summary of the recent town hall on the subject.

During the ensuing discussion surrounding this issue, members expressed several comments and questions including but not limited to: impairment of students and staff members; human resources policy; prescription/medical use; privacy; campus security and enforcement; city bylaws; racial prejudice; issues related to residences; concerns with inhalants; and the health and safety of the university community.

ACTION ITEMS

5. Clean Air Strategy

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Dilini Vethanayagam, Elected GFC faculty member, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry

Purpose of the Proposal: To direct Administration to develop a clean air strategy

Discussion:

Dr Vethanayagam introduced the topic noting concerns with: lung cancer and asthma, psychotropic issues that impact academic performance, and student mental health.

During the discussion, members expressed several comments and questions including but not limited to: safe workplace, smudging policy, city bylaws regarding smoking and vaping; smoking and vaping close to doorways and air intakes; second hand smoke; impact on respiratory diseases; the university's image and reputation; "stealth vaping"; and the health and safety of the entire university community. Comments were also made about other institutions being smoke free, and how city bylaws are used on campus.

Motion: Vethanayagam/Tupper

THAT General Faculties Council direct administration to develop a clean air strategy to minimize student, staff,

and faculty exposure to smoke from cigarettes, inhaled cannabis, vapes and hookah pipes.

CARRIED

EARLY CONSULTATION

6. ad hoc Recommendation for a free-standing Nominating Committee

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Jonathan White, Chair, GFC Nominating Committee

Discussion:

Dr White gave a brief overview of the context of the proposal and discussions on how to implement the recommendation of the GFC ad hoc Committee on Academic Governance including Delegated Authority for a free-standing Nominating Committee. He thanked the members of the Nominating and Replenishment Committees, and governance, for their work on this proposal.

He indicated that this was coming before GFC for feedback which would be incorporated into the final proposal. He highlighted for GFC that the composition for the proposed committee would include an elected graduate student, and that a free-standing Nominating Committee would be replenished in the same manner as all other GFC standing committees. He then drew members' attention to the transition plan, which would move the nominating functions from the current Nominating Committee and Replenishment Committee to a new free-standing nominating committee.

Members discussed and asked questions related to: the number of members on the new committee and the inclusion of ex-officio student members; the role of the committee in appointing the chair of the Student Conduct Policy Committee; perceived conflicts of interest in the committee replenishing its own membership; and the method for determining recommendations. Dr White noted that while the Nominating Committee makes recommendations, GFC is the body that appoints or elects members to serve on standing committees.

Dr White noted that the annual replenishment of GFC committees is underway and confirmed that there were a variety of positions available to GFC and non-GFC members. He also indicated that committee compositions would be subject to change as revised terms of reference come before GFC committees for approval.

7. Housing for Students who Parent

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Andrew Sharman, Vice-President (Facilities and Operations); Katherine Huisling, Associate Vice President Ancillary Services

Discussion:

Mr Sharman indicated that the Michener Park Residence is currently facing issues related to access to transportation, security risks, and required maintenance. He noted that a working group is being formed to assess the current and future needs of students with families and the reasonable steps the university can take in meeting these needs.

Ms Huisling indicated that a variety of engagement strategies were being planned to ensure robust participation and connect with a wider group of students who parent. Mr Sharman also noted that no formal decision has been made to close the residence at this time.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

8. Question Period

During question period members asked questions about the budget cuts and fee increases as well as the Minister of Advanced Education's statements in the Edmonton Journal regarding the university budget. Dr Turpin answered the questions and referred to his PowerPoint slides. He explained how the budget will address increasing costs and the structural deficit.

The Board Chair's response to the Edmonton Journal article regarding budget cuts was read:

The university is facing significant financial challenges—a growing structural deficit as well as over-dependence on short-term investment income to fund operating costs. We are always concerned about affordability and accessibility for our students, and the university provides significant financial supports including scholarships, bursaries, and short-term loans. But the university cannot use either domestic tuition or the government grant to subsidize international fees, or residences and meal plans. Residences and meal plans are ancillary operations that must be self-funding. Our international students are required to pay the full cost of their education so that domestic students are not disadvantaged. We have made every effort to ensure the Minister and Ministry have been fully informed and understand the reasons behind the budget cut, and I'm surprised by the Minister's comments in the Edmonton Journal earlier today.

I, together with all the members of our Board, care deeply about all of our students, and we are committed to the present-day and long-term financial health and viability of the University of Alberta. We have worked closely with the president and the administrative team to come up with viable solutions to the financial challenges. We also recognize their high level of skill and compensate them competitively. The Board's vote to approve the fee increase and the budget occurred after thorough analysis and lengthy discussion of the facts and alternatives. It was not an easy decision because we understand the short-term impacts on students, faculty and staff alike. But we also understand the dangers of not taking action.

*Michael Phair, Chair
University of Alberta Board of Governors*

Members asked questions and expressed comments regarding the provincial government's decision to allow several new Alberta colleges to pursue degree granting status.

A member asked about the students who were asked to leave the Board meeting on Friday, March 16, 2018. The University Secretary noted that the students were not asked to leave, they were asked to stop live-streaming the Board meeting and then chose to leave. She further explained that the Board members had not given their consent to be filmed or photographed and that this was clearly communicated to all those in attendance. The University Secretary also indicated that the Board, through its Board Working Group was looking into procedural matters, and would be reporting back in due course.

INFORMATION REPORTS

9. Report of the GFC Executive Committee

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

10. Report of the GFC Academic Planning Committee

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

11. Report of the GFC Academic Standards Committee

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

12. GFC Nominations and Elections - Current GFC committee vacancies

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

13. Information Items

There were no items.

14. Information Forwarded to GFC Members Between Meetings - President's Early Response to the Federal Budget

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

CLOSING SESSION

15. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:50 p.m.