



General Faculties Council
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, March 21, 2022
Zoom Virtual Meeting
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Statutory Members:

Ex-Officio:

Bill Flanagan, Chair
Simaan AbouRizk
Chris Andersen
Dale Askey
Barbara Billingsley
Stanford Blade
Steven Dew
Todd Gilchrist
Brenda Hemmelgarn
Nick Holt
Tammy Hopper
Christine Hughes
Shanthi Johnson
Diane Kunyk
Brooke Milne
Pierre-Yves Mocquais
Kyle Murray
Melissa Padfield
Aminah Robinson Fayek
Wendy Rodgers
Andrew Sharman
Demetres Tryphonopoulos
Jennifer Tupper
Frederick West

Electing Faculty:

Jason Acker
J Nelson Amaral
Saadet Andrews
Nicholas Beier
Ahmed Bouferguene
Jennifer Branch-Mueller
Heather Coleman
Gary Eitzen
Anastasia Elias
Jaymie Heilman
Michael Hendzel
Carol Hodgson Birkman
Peter Hurd
Nat Kav
Vadim Kravchinsky

Hollis Lai
Jacqueline Leighton
Runjuan Liu
Derek MacKenzie
Al Meldrum
Sourayan Mookerjea
Sarah Moore
Weimin Mou
Mario Nascimento
Pauline Paul
Jerine Pegg
Sujata Persad
Elena Posse de Chaves
Dan Romanyk
Victoria Ruetalo
John Spence
Laura Stovel
Mani Vaidyanathan
Kristof Van Assche
Richard Wozniak
Moin Yahya
Yan Yuan

Students:

Talia Dixon
Kathy Haddadkar
Abner Monteiro
Appointed Members:
Heba Aref
Susan Babcock
Leyla Baghersad Renani
Marsha Boyd
Heather Bruce
Chiara Concini
Greta Cummings
Maddie Dempsey
Joseph Doucet
Ryan Dunch
Anas Fassih
Levi Flaman
Shawn Flynn
Kyle Foster
Tahmid Al Hafiz
Jill Hall

Emily Holden
Matina Kalcounis-Rueppell
Gurleen Kaur
Simran Kaur Dhillon
Rokhand Khademi
Georgia Korfeh
Valentina Kozlova
Shashi Kumar
Jesse Lafontaine
Jenny Lam
Shing Lao
Rowan Ley
Maggie Lin
Andrew Locke
Tim Mills
Angie Mandeville
Adekunle Mofolasayo
Laura Reifferscheid
Sarah Severson
Sophie Shi
Chanpreet Singh
Shubham Soni
Cindy Sun
Andrei Tabirca
Frederick Tappenden
Helen Vallianatos
Dilini Vethanayagam
Julia Viloso
Adrian Wattamaniuk
Kyle Whitlock
Adrienne Wright
Shuce Zhang

REGRETS:

Ghalia Aamer
Nikita Adekar
Sandeep Agrawal
Ashmeen Aneja
Samar Barazesh
Andrew Batycki
Chris Beasley
Vaughn Beaulieu-Mercredi
Robert Burrell

Marie Carrière
Nicole de Grano
Andy Deprato
Devin Doherty
Michael Dyck
Lisa Glock
Harnoor Kalra
Jessica Kolopenuk
Mohit Kumar
Devshri Lala
Pierre Lemelin
Elan MacDonald
Tia Marko
Reagan Morris
Emily Motoska
Yusuf Oliya
Mary Olukotun
Sanhita Pal
Steve Patten
Frances Plane
Keith Rourke
Carolyn Sale
Khandaker Akib Shahriar
Allison Sivak
Aadhavya Sivakumaran
Rama Taha
Siddharth Thakur
Amy Tse
Alan Underhill
Phillip Vandevalk
Shauna Wilton
Akanksha Yeola
Nese Yuksel

Staff:

Brad Hamdon, General
Counsel and University
Secretary
Kate Peters, GFC
Secretary
Heather Richholt, Scribe
Edyta McLoughlin
Laura Riley

OPENING SESSION

Before calling the meeting to order, the Chair acknowledged, "that we are located on Treaty 6 territory. We respect 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): Bill Flanagan, President and Vice-Chancellor, and Chair of GFC

Motion: Liu/Moore

THAT General Faculties Council approve the agenda.

CARRIED

2. Report from the President

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Bill Flanagan, President and Vice-Chancellor, and Chair of GFC

Discussion:

The Chair asked Brooke Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) to speak on behalf of the GFC Nominating Committee. B Milne noted that there were 24 vacancies for elected faculty representatives to GFC and that GFC members were also expected to put their names forward to serve on GFC standing committees. She asked the Faculty Deans to consider initiating the process for Faculty Councils to elect their representatives now so that new members could be part of the replenishment of standing committee seats in May. B Milne also asked outgoing members to "shoulder tap" their colleagues to encourage them to put their names forward to assist in finding their replacements.

The Chair noted that the Board of Governors and the Association of the Academic Staff of the University of Alberta (AASUA) had ratified a new collective agreement for the period of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2024. He also informed members that the GFC meetings of May 2 and June 6 were scheduled to be held in Council Chambers with options for members to connect virtually.

CONSENT AGENDA

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Discussion:

The Chair noted that the consent agenda included the minutes from the February 28th meeting, the new members item, the termination of a degree specialization, and three items which included proposed changes to regulations for the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR). He explained that Executive Committee members inquired about the placement of the FGSR items on consent and were informed that these proposals require approval by GFC because they apply to all graduate students, but they were placed on the consent agenda because there had been strong support at both FGSR Council and the GFC Programs Committee (PC). The Chair reminded members that they could signal to the GFC Secretary before the meeting if they wished to pull items from the consent agenda to have them discussed.

Members discussed whether it was appropriate for the FGSR items to be approved on a consent agenda or whether they should be discussed. The members who spoke did not ask for the items to be pulled from the consent agenda but discussed only whether FGSR items should be approved in this way. GFC Secretary Kate

Peters noted that items were placed on the consent agenda when they were deemed to be non-controversial and in an effort to streamline meeting processes. She indicated that FGSR regulations, no matter how minor, would always have to be approved by GFC because they applied to all graduate students across the university and were therefore outside the scope of the delegated authority held by PC.

In response to a clarification question, the Chair noted that there had not been a request to pull an item from the consent agenda and that GFC could proceed to a vote.

Consent Agenda Mover and Secunder: Liu/Moore

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of February 28, 2022

THAT General Faculties Council approve the open session minutes of February 28, 2022.

CARRIED

4. New Members of GFC

TO APPOINT:

The following undergraduate student representative to the Board of Governors to serve on GFC for a term commencing March 21, 2022 and ending April 30, 2022:

- Adrian Wattamaniuk

The following elected Postdoctoral representative to serve on GFC for a term commencing March 21, 2022 and ending June 30, 2022:

- Leyla Baghersad Renani

CARRIED

TO RECEIVE:

The following statutory faculty member who has been elected/re-elected by their Faculty, to serve on GFC for a term of office beginning March 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2024:

- Pauline Paul, Faculty of Nursing

CARRIED

5. Termination of the ALES Specialization in the Master of Engineering

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee because the ALES specialization in the MEng has been suspended for the past five years; this is the formal request to terminate the program.

THAT General Faculties Council recommend the Board of Governors approve the termination of the ALES specialization in the Master of Engineering, for implementation upon final approval.

CARRIED

6. Proposed Core Graduate Student Academic Requirements, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal outlines the core graduate academic requirements for each respective graduate credential awarded at the UofA, as approved by GFC and the Ministry of Advanced Education.

THAT the General Faculties Council approve the proposed core graduate academic requirements for all graduate credentials offered at the University of Alberta as set forth in attachments 1 and 2, for implementation upon approval.

CARRIED

7. Proposed Changes to Graduate Student Residence Requirements, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

Purpose of the Proposal: FGSR is proposing to remove the institutional residence requirement for Master's and Doctoral graduate degree programs. The proposal will not affect those programs who have existing, approved residence requirements. Future program proposals are free to include such a requirement as desired.

THAT the General Faculties Council approve the proposed changes to the residence requirement for all graduate students, as noted in the included calendar change, for implementation upon approval.

CARRIED

8. Proposed Alternate Criteria for English Language Proficiency, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

Purpose of the Proposal: An exceptional alternate pathway to meet the institutional ELP Requirement is being proposed for prospective graduate student applicants who have attained a credential(s) from an international institution where the primary language of instruction is not English but who subsequently are able to demonstrate ELP through one or more of the proposed criteria.

THAT General Faculties Council approve the proposed alternate admissions criteria for the English Language Proficiency Requirement for those applicants with a previous credential or accreditation as set forth in attachment 1, for implementation upon approval.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

9. Indigenous Institutional Strategic Plan (IISP)

Presentation and Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Florence Glanfield, Vice-Provost (Indigenous Programming and Research); Nella Sajlovic, Indigenous Strategies Manager

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee for discussion of the final draft of the IISP goals and accountabilities and to solicit feedback on an affirmation document.

Discussion:

The Chair indicated that the IISP was the university's next step in creating a campus-wide vision that followed upon the work begun by the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). He noted the U of A's commitment to develop a thoughtful, respectful, meaningful and sustainable response to the TRC Calls to Action and address the structural causes of the long-standing and pronounced inequalities faced by Indigenous peoples today. He also noted that because this item was of particular strategic importance to the University, the Executive Committee placed it as the first item on the agenda.

F Glanfield spoke about:

- The wide consultation path (internal and external) and final Board of Governors endorsement scheduled for June 2022;
- Through the extensive consultations around the UofA's new brand, Indigenous Initiatives (Indigenous Ways of Knowing) emerged as one of the key pillars of "Leading with Purpose";
- Indigenous Initiatives were also a key focus of University of Alberta for Tomorrow;
- As recent events had unfolded this year, there had been a renewed expectation from Indigenous and non-Indigenous stakeholders alike for the University of Alberta take up its role in Indigenous-focused work and realize its commitment to the full scope of the TRC Calls to Action;
- This work touches on nearly every academic and operational aspect of the university including:
 - infrastructure to support student success;
 - new Quality Assurance processes to tackle curricular gaps;
 - administrative processes for honoraria; and

- ethical frameworks to guide Indigenous-engaged research;
- Feedback from the university community had been overwhelmingly positive;
- Two broad themes emerged in the early consultations: accountabilities and budget;
- The creation of an institutional affirmation to highlight the deep individual and collective commitment to embedding indigenization into the academic and administrative institutional structures that have the power to make these changes;
- This work is an increasingly critical operational requirement given that Indigenous peoples make up more than 260,000 people in Alberta—a total of 6.5% of the province's population;
- The university has made progress in alignment with these commitments but there is more to be done to meet new and emerging requirements for better practices in Indigenous-focused research, curriculum and community engagement;
- Opportunities related to funding agencies' priorities related to Indigenous community engagement and Indigenous-focused research; and
- Requirements of professional associations, accreditation bodies, government funders and research agencies.

Members expressed congratulations and their support and appreciation of the work that F Glanfield and N Sajlovic had undertaken.

ACTION ITEMS

10. Proposed Exploration Credits Policy

Presentation and Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Melissa Padfield, Vice-Provost and University Registrar; Rowan Ley, President, University of Alberta Students' Union

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is to adopt an Exploration Credits policy at the University of Alberta.

Discussion:

M Padfield and R Ley provided an overview of the proposal and noted that they were pleased with the support it had received across the university.

During the discussion, members asked questions and expressed comments including but not limited to:

- The definition of the academic year (September to August) in the context of the proposal;
- The ability to participate when on academic probation;
- That some of the specifics would need to be worked out through implementation;
- The differences between exploration credits and course audits;
- How the determination was made that a D or "minimal pass" would be the minimum grade for a credit instead of a C- or "satisfactory";
- Alignment with the use of credit/no credit grading in other circumstances; and
- That although the proposal aimed to allow the broadest possible opportunity for participation, the need for understanding that there would be exceptions where students could not participate.

Motion: Liu/Moore

THAT General Faculties Council approve, as recommended by GFC Programs Committee, the proposed Exploration Credits policy, as set forth in the attached documents, for implementation starting Fall Term 2022.

CARRIED

11. Proposed Changes to the General Faculties Council Guiding Documents

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Brad Hamdon, General Counsel and University Secretary; Anastasia Elias, Elected Faculty Member, Engineering, Vice-Chair of GFC Executive Committee

Purpose of the Proposal: To approve proposed changes to the GFC Principles for committee composition, the GFC Meeting Procedural Rules, and the GFC Roles and Responsibilities Document. In addition, GFC is asked to approve the Principles for GFC Delegation of Authority and to delete the GFC Question Period Procedure.

Discussion:

B Hamdon and A Elias noted their roles on the Executive Committee and the Ad Hoc Review Committee that had done the original work to review the guiding documents in spring 2021. They provided an overview of the changes made to the proposal since the discussion at GFC in October 2021, and the work of the GFC Executive Committee to consider feedback received from GFC members.

There was no discussion about the *Principles for GFC Standing Committee Composition* or the *Principles for GFC Delegation of Authority*.

Regarding the *Roles and Responsibilities of Members*, members discussed:

- whether the language was instructing members how to think and act;
- that the points were aspirational and outlined a vision for common points of agreement but were not enforceable;
- that the points underscored broad agreement but still allowed room for a critical voice;
- that the document could be used as guidance to set the tone and expectations of behaviour; and
- that the document served as a public declaration of where the institution stands.

Regarding the *Meeting Procedural Rules*, members discussed:

- the removal of the time limit for a speaker;
- whether there was any recourse to limit speakers who monopolized the discussion;
- the 10 minute limit for a speaker as set out in *Robert's Rules of Order*; and
- the discretion of the Chair to manage the speaker's list.

A member made a motion to amend section 2.3 of the *Meeting Procedural Rules* to add that a special meeting could be called upon request of 25% of the membership. He noted that comparator institutions allowed for this, that it was important for members of GFC to have this power, and that it should not belong solely to the Chair. A member agreed that GFC should have this power but felt that a 50% threshold would be more appropriate since there were already eight meetings of GFC scheduled each year, and proposed an amendment the amendment. The original mover and seconder agreed to accept 50% as a friendly amendment.

Regarding the proposed amendment to the motion, members discussed:

- the number of GFC meetings already scheduled and requirements to meet quorum;
- matters of equity for members who had other responsibilities and may not be able to attend a special meeting with little notice;
- that 50% of members required to request a special meeting meant that GFC could meet the threshold if administration was opposed but both the students and the academic staff were in favour; and
- that GFC meetings were very full so the ability to request a special meeting could be valuable for members.

Motion: Liu/Moore

THAT General Faculties Council approve the proposed changes to the Principles for GFC Standing Committee Composition as set out in tracked changes in Attachment 1 to take effect upon approval.

CARRIED

Motion: Liu/Moore

THAT General Faculties Council approve the Principles for GFC Delegation of Authority as originally approved on April 21, 2017 and as set out in Attachment 2.

CARRIED

Motion: Liu/Moore

THAT General Faculties Council approve the proposed changes to the Roles and Responsibilities of Members as set out in tracked changes in Attachment 3 to take effect upon approval.

CARRIED

Motion: Singh/Hafiz

Motion from the floor:

Proposed Amendment to Section 2.3 of the GFC Meeting Procedural Rules:

The Chair of GFC may call a special meeting of GFC. The Chair of GFC shall call a special meeting of GFC when one-half (1/2) of GFC's members submit a written request for a special meeting to the GFC Secretary. The request must clearly state the proposed business of the special meeting. Notice of special meetings is normally given to members at least one month in advance. If required, an electronic vote (requiring two-thirds majority of votes cast) may be used to approve the waiver of the one-month notice.

CARRIED

Motion: Liu/Moore

THAT General Faculties Council approve the proposed changes to the Meeting Procedural Rules as set out in tracked changes in Attachment 4, as amended, and the concurrent rescission of the GFC Question Period Procedures as set out in attachment 5 to take effect upon approval.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

12. Question Period

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Bill Flanagan, President and Vice-Chancellor, and Chair of GFC

Discussion:

A member asked a question about the funds that would be gained due to the Exceptional Tuition Increases that had recently been approved by the government and whether there would be a mechanism for students who must pay higher tuition to hold their Faculties accountable for using the funds to improve programming. Provost and Vice-President (Academic) Steven Dew replied that the Faculties were accountable to the government and would have to provide data. When asked if this information would be shared with GFC, S Dew replied that he would look into it and have that conversation.

As a follow up to question 12.1 about procurement, A Elias asked how it would cost the university extra money to allow staff to source and purchase their own supplies. Vice-President (University Services and Finance) Todd Gilchrist replied that procurement would deal with specifics but gave the example of computer equipment noting

that purchasing from non-standard suppliers may end up costing more on the back-end related to service, support, returns, and warranty.

Members asked questions and expressed comments related to procurement including:

- whether there could be a delay or soft implementation of the new purchasing rules;
- a request for assurance that the institutional approach would not clash with the needs of the individual researcher;
- whether the new system would create more workload for instructors;
- the rationale for requiring preferred airlines when flights in and out of Edmonton were so limited; and
- an experience of a transition to a similar purchasing system at another institution that was seamless.

Several members asked questions and expressed concerns about the partnership of the University of Alberta with MyCreds including:

- students would now have to pay for a proof of enrollment document when they could previously download the PDF from Bear Tracks for free;
- that students did not ask for this service nor were they appropriately consulted;
- that a ten dollar fee may not seem like a lot, but that students pay enough for their education and this was just one more thing; and
- that it was easy to say that students can reach out for help but this just adds an additional barrier for students who are already overwhelmed.

Vice-Provost and Registrar Melissa Padfield explained that MyCreds offered a verified method to share and validate digital documents and that PDF documents were not as secure. She noted that her office strove to create sustainable services for students and keep the costs as low as possible. She also explained that verification of enrollment for Canada student loans would not require a fee and that the Office of the Registrar would work with students who had financial barriers.

13. Report of the General Faculties Council ad hoc Committee for the Formal Review of the Consultations and Action Processes for Academic Restructuring in the Fall of 2020

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Heather Coleman, Elected GFC Faculty Member, Co-Chair of the ad hoc Committee

Discussion:

H Coleman thanked the members of the committee who participated as well as those who shared materials and their experiences of the consultations and action processes for Academic Restructuring. She noted that it was her hope that GFC would find the report useful for future decision making on important issues. She also noted that if GFC agreed, the Executive Subcommittee on Governance and Procedural Oversight could be asked to look at the report and consider how to implement the recommendations.

A member agreed that the recommendations should be integrated into GFC processes going forward. A member noted that the changes brought about through the Service Excellence Transformation (SET) and Academic Restructuring have been challenging for the university community.

The Chair thanked the members of the ad hoc committee for their work and noted that the Executive Committee would consider how to work through the recommendations.

14. Proposed Changes to the Terms of Reference for the GFC Academic Planning Committee and the Committee on the Learning Environment and the Proposed Disbanding of the Facilities Development Committee

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file

Presenter(s): Jason Acker, Elected GFC Faculty Member, and Chair of Executive Subcommittee on Governance and Procedural Oversight; Kate Peters, Secretary to General Faculties Council

Discussion:

K Peters and J Acker provided some background on the conversations and consultation to date including advice from Executive's Subcommittee on Governance and Procedural Oversight (GPO) to emphasize that this should be done as a two-pronged process:

- to disband the GFC Facilities Development Committee (FDC) and move its delegated authority to the GFC Academic Planning Committee (APC) and the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) to ensure no interruption in decision-making, and
- to complete a comprehensive review of APC and CLE's terms of reference as scheduled in the fall.

Members asked whether FDC had been consulted on this proposal and whether restructuring had anything to do with the cancellations of meetings.

A member asked if APC and CLE would have the bandwidth to discuss matters related to the university space management and noted the important role of GFC's advice, even if the ultimate decision belonged to administration or the Board of Governors.

Deputy Provost and Chair of FDC Wendy Rodgers noted that FDC had discussed this proposal several times and questioned both whether they had the necessary expertise, and whether an entire GFC committee was needed for facilities development. She also noted that the work of APC and CLE related to academic planning and the learning environment corresponded well to the discussions and decisions that were needed related to university facilities.

INFORMATION REPORTS

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

15. Report of the GFC Executive Committee
16. Report of the GFC Academic Planning Committee
17. GFC Nominations and Elections
- Anticipated Vacancies
18. Information Items:
A. Proposed Changes to the Collective Agreement: appointment, promotion and dismissal procedures
B. COVID Decision Tracker

CLOSING SESSION

19. Adjournment
- Next Meeting of General Faculties Council: May 2, 2022

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.