

The following Motions and Documents were considered by the General Faculties Council at its Monday, April 20, 2020 meeting:

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Agenda Title: **University of Alberta Charter of Student Rights and Responsibilities**

CARRIED MOTION:

THAT General Faculties Council endorse the implementation of the University of Alberta Charter on Student Rights and Responsibilities, as recommended by the GFC Executive Committee and as set forth in attachment 1.

FINAL Item 5

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Agenda Title: **Upcoming Considerations for GFC** - Letter Template - Discussion

CARRIED MOTION:

THAT General Faculties Council endorse the Registrar's Letter [a student resource to be downloaded as needed, reflecting the decision made by the University to award either a "CR" (Credit) or "NC" (No Credit) grade for the semester ending with the Winter 2020 term]. This endorsement also included the modification of one sentence in the letter to read "The grade of "CR" indicates that students have fulfilled the requirements of the course." This modification was made so that language more closely aligned with terminology used in official documents such as the degree parchment.

CARRIED MOTION:

THAT General Faculties Council endorse the provision of guidance for instructors wishing to provide commentary on student performance within their courses during the Winter 2020 term and will clearly communicate to the community that it is guidance.

**Motions from the floor** - Item 6C

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FINAL Item No. 5

**Governance Executive Summary  
Action Item**

<b>Agenda Title</b>	<b>University of Alberta Charter on Student Rights and Responsibilities</b>
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**Motion**

<p>THAT General Faculties Council endorse the implementation of the University of Alberta Charter on Student Rights and Responsibilities, as recommended by the GFC Executive Committee and as set forth in attachment 1.</p>
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**Item**

Action Requested	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation
Proposed by	Akanksha Bhatnagar, President, University of Alberta Student Union (UASU)
Presenter(s)	Akanksha Bhatnagar, President, UASU Fahed Elian, President, GSA André Costopoulos, Vice Provost and Dean of Students

**Details**

Office of Administrative Responsibility	General Faculties Council (GFC)
The Purpose of the Proposal is ( <i>please be specific</i> )	Following extensive consultations with the University of Alberta Community, the Charter of Student Rights and Responsibilities is before the General Faculties Council Executive Committee to secure its recommendation for endorsement at GFC on April 20, 2020.
Executive Summary ( <i>outline the specific item – and remember your audience</i> )	<p><u>Key Considerations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since this proposal last came to GFC on January 27 2020, the following substantive changes have been made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Following consultation with the Vice Provost and Dean of Students, who in turn consulted with the Office of the General Counsel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The <i>Student Rights and Responsibilities Resource</i> has been renamed the University of Alberta Student Charter on Rights and Responsibilities (the Charter); and</li> <li>▪ The preamble has been updated to clarify the Charter's purpose as a centralized resource for students (primarily) and the University Committee as a whole: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>With links to</i> live policies and procedures imbedded, therein.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Charter will appear on the UAlberta and UASU websites alongside links to resources (e.g. the Office of the Student Ombuds).</li> </ul> <p><u>Background</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys done at the University of Alberta Students' Union indicate that there is a widespread lack of awareness of key policies that outline student rights and responsibilities.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several Canadian universities (e.g. McGill, McMaster, Bishop's, and Trent) publish Charters of Student Rights or comparable resources. These resources consolidate student rights and responsibilities for ease of access and greater awareness, creating a culture of improved clarity and accountability.</li> <li>• The UASU, in collaboration with University stakeholders, prepared a comparable document as a guide to the authoritative policies where students can learn their rights and responsibilities for a variety of contexts.</li> </ul> <p><u>Next Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Endorsement at GFC on April 20, 2020.</li> </ul>
Supplementary Notes and context	<p><i>Applicable sections of the Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA):</i></p> <p><i>s. 26(1) – “subject to the authority of the board, a general faculties council is responsible for the academic affairs....”</i></p> <p><i>s. 93 (3) – “the students association...shall provide for the administration of student affairs at the public post-secondary institution, including ... the promotion of the general welfare of the students” (PSLA</i></p> <p><i>s. 95 (4) -“ the council of a student organization is the official channel of communication between the students of a public post-secondary institution... and the board”.</i></p>

**Engagement and Routing** (Include meeting dates)

<p>Consultation and Stakeholder Participation (parties who have seen the proposal and in what capacity)</p> <p>&lt;For information on the protocol see the <a href="#">Governance Resources section Student Participation Protocol</a>&gt;</p>	<p><b><u>Those who are actively participating:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of Alberta Students' Union (UASU)</li> <li>• University of Alberta Graduate Students' Association</li> <li>• University Governance</li> <li>• Office of the Vice Provost and Dean of Students</li> <li>• Office of the President</li> <li>• Office of the Provost</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Those who have been consulted:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of Alberta Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights - March 23, 2020</li> <li>• University of Alberta Office of the Student Ombuds - February 10, 2020</li> <li>• GFC - January 27, 2020</li> <li>• Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council - January 22, 2020</li> <li>• University of Alberta Students' Council - January 21, 2020</li> <li>• GFC Academic Standards Committee - January 16, 2020</li> <li>• GFC Academic Planning Committee - December 11, 2019</li> <li>• GFC Executive Committee - December 9, 2019</li> <li>• GFC Committee on the Learning Environment - December 4, 2019</li> <li>• GFC Council on Student Affairs - November 29, 2019</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Those who have been informed:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>

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Approval Route (Governance) (including meeting dates)	GFC Executive Committee – April 6, 2020 General Faculties Council – April 20, 2020
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**Strategic Alignment**

Alignment with <i>For the Public Good</i>	Objective 21	
Alignment with Core Risk Area	Please note below the specific institutional risk(s) this proposal is addressing.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolment Management <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Faculty and Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Funding and Resource Management <input type="checkbox"/> IT Services, Software and Hardware <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership and Change <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Infrastructure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relationship with Stakeholders <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reputation <input type="checkbox"/> Research Enterprise <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safety <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student Success
Legislative Compliance and jurisdiction	<i>Post-Secondary Learning Act</i>	

Attachments (each to be numbered 1 - <>)

1. The University of Alberta Charter on Student Rights and Responsibilities

*Prepared by:* Yimmie Sonuga, General Faculties Council (GFC) Secretary and Manager of GFC Services, yimmie.sonuga@ualberta.ca

## University of Alberta Charter of Student Rights and Responsibilities

*Last updated: April 6, 2020*

### **Preamble**

*This document serves as a guide to navigating student rights and responsibilities at the University of Alberta.*

A positive, engaged student experience often depends on students being fully informed about their rights and responsibilities. Clear expectations and standards can protect students and help them avoid mistakes, misunderstandings, and serious problems during their time at the University of Alberta.

This document aims to create clarity for undergraduate and graduate students about the authoritative resources that explain their rights and responsibilities. Within the scope of the University of Alberta's authority, diverse policies and procedures are the authoritative resources. As students' rights and responsibilities are spread throughout many policy documents, this document will serve as a *proactive* resource to help students avoid problems, and a *reactive* resource to help them navigate appeals and disciplinary processes in ways that produce the fairest possible results. In the event of a conflict or inconsistency between this guide and the University's policies and procedures, the University's policies and procedures prevail.

Students should also find valuable insights into University policy through the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). In addition, faculty-specific standards and procedures can affect students' rights and responsibilities.

### **Procedural Fairness**

- Procedural fairness encompasses a broad envelope of standards and best practices, including but not limited to accessibility, clear notice of rights and options, presumption of innocence, protection against intimidation, the right to prepare a full defense, the right to know what is at stake or what potential consequences might be, and lack of bias on the part of the decision-maker. Principles of procedural fairness apply to many decision-making processes that students encounter.
- Many principles of procedural fairness are outlined in section 30.1.1 of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#). The University also affirms the right to procedural fairness in the [Sexual Violence Policy](#) and the [Ethical Conduct and Safe Disclosure Procedure](#).
- The [Office of the Student Ombuds](#) is a key resource on how procedural and substantive fairness applies to the rights and responsibilities in this document and promotes relational and equitable fairness in the application of University policy and procedure.

## **Academic Rights and Responsibilities**

- The right to appeal marks, grades, and decisions affecting academic standing is found in the [University Calendar Academic Regulations](#), under 'Academic Appeals' and 'Grievances Concerning Grades.'
- Rights involving the structure of courses and grading expectations can be found in the [University Calendar Academic Regulations](#) under 'Course Requirements, Evaluation Procedures and Grading.' The [Assessment and Grading Policy](#) and its procedures lay out binding principles for fair, consistent assessment and grading.
- Section 30.3.2 of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#) outlines standards around plagiarism and cheating.
- The [Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy](#) and the [Research Policy](#) extend the right to free expression and freedom of inquiry to all members of the University community, including students.
- The [Student Concerns and Complaints Policy](#) addresses the extent and limits of a student's right to privacy when submitting a complaint against a staff member or instructor.

## **Individual Rights and Responsibilities**

- The [Code of Student Behaviour](#) both protects students and outlines the University's binding behavioural standards.
- The [Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy](#) explains students' rights to a dignified, respectful learning and working environment; their options for reporting and recourse; and their right to accommodation based on protected grounds (e.g. race, religion, gender expression, disability, or political beliefs). It also provides thorough guidance on what constitutes discrimination or harassment.
- Students' rights of free speech and expression, in keeping with all applicable Canadian and provincial laws, including human rights laws, are explained in the [Principles on Free Expression](#).
- The [Posting Announcements, Notices and Banners Procedure](#) further affirms students' right of free expression: "Where a posting is lawful and compliant with University policies and procedures, content will not be a factor in determining approval of posting announcements, notices, and banners." Students who wish to post these materials are responsible for complying with the Procedure and associated guidelines.
- While not a legal right, the [Registrar's Office](#) affirms that students have the option to use their preferred name and change their gender designation.
- The [Alcohol Policy](#) and its procedures deal with safe alcohol consumption, event safety, and alcohol consumption at student group events. Students and groups are responsible

for safe consumption practices. The [Student Groups Procedure](#) details responsibility around prohibited or risky conduct in the context of student groups and events.

- All students involved in non-academic misconduct complaints, either as complainants or accused, have a right to due process. The University enshrines the right to due process in, among other places, the [Ethical Conduct and Safe Disclosure Procedure](#). This procedure also protects and guides students who need to report misconduct.
- The [Access to Information and Privacy Policy](#) and its procedures outline how the University will protect and use students' personal information, and how students can access information about themselves.
- The [Canvassing and Solicitation Policy](#), sections 30.3.4-5 of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#), and the [Student Groups Procedure](#) explain students' ability to campaign and approach others on campus. They also detail the rules that students can rely on when facing unwanted solicitation.

## **Rights Specific to Graduate Students**

### Academic Supervisory Rights for Students

- Graduate students have specific rights related to academic supervision and supervisory committees. These are outlined in the University Calendar under the [Graduate Policy and Regulations](#) and in the [Graduate Student Program Manual](#), sections 1 and 8.

### Intellectual Property Rights

- Graduate students' ownership of their work and intellectual property rights are discussed in multiple University policies, a list of which is available in the [Intellectual Property Guidelines](#) document. Section 10 of the [Graduate Student Program Manual](#) also discusses this topic.

### Rights when Academically Employed

- Students employed as Graduate Teaching Assistants or Graduate Research Assistants, or holders of Graduate Research Assistant Fellowships have rights as outlined in the [Graduate Student Assistantship Collective Agreement](#).
- Additional rights related to graduate student employment are outlined in provincial legislation, including the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#) and the [Employment Standards Code](#).