

TERMS OF REFERENCE

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Approved December 2020

Mandate

SLIS School Council is established as the chief governing and advisory body of the School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS) under Section 28(1) of the Post-Secondary Learning Act.

SLIS School Council functions as a faculty council reporting directly to the General Faculties Council (GFC) and engages in consultative processes to enrich decision-making within the School. It fulfills this purpose to insure that, as prescribed by the American Library Association, Office of Accreditation's Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library & Information Studies, 2008 " . . . the autonomy of the School is sufficient to assure that the intellectual content of its program, the selection and promotion of its faculty, and the selection of its students are determined by the school within the general guidelines of the institution." Faculty council powers and compositions are set out in Section 28 and 29 of the Act. Further authorization concerning faculty council powers, compositions, and quorums at the University of Alberta is outlined in the GFC Policy Manual, Sections 55, 55.3 and 55.5.

Process

SLIS School Council consists of the School of Library and Information Studies academic staff and representatives of other stakeholder groups.

SLIS School Council advises on the processes by which the mission, goals and objectives of the school are determined. Course and program changes must be reviewed and approved by SLIS School Council. School Council has the authority to reaffirm decisions made by the Academic Council and, when appropriate, has the authority to request Academic Council to review or reconsider decisions.

Composition

SLIS School Council meetings are open to members only. Guests shall be invited only through the Chair, and are not eligible to vote. Guests may be present for part or all of the meeting. Representatives should be reviewed on a yearly basis following the July 01 Academic Year change.

The membership of SLIS School Council consists of:

1. Ex officio members with voting privileges

- a. The President of the University, or designate;
- b. The Dean of the Faculty of Education, or designate;
- c. The Chair of SLIS, who shall be Chair of SLIS School Council; and
- d. All continuing full-time members of SLIS academic staff drawn from Academic Council. At the University of Alberta academic staff is interpreted to mean all continuing academic staff in Category A1.0 (GFC 28 NOV 1988) (EXEC 19 MAR 1998):

Category A1.0 Continuing

- i. A1.1 (Faculty) (continuing) / Tenure-track; teaching, research; Council-AAS: UA (Faculty) Agreement
- ii. A1.2 Administration & Professional Officers (continuing) / Tenure-track; professional, managerial; Council AAS: UA (APO) Agreement
- iii. A1.3 Faculty Service Officers (continuing) / Tenure-track; professional, technical; Council AAS: UA (FSO) Agreement
- iv. A1.4 Librarians (continuing) / Tenure-track; professional, managerial; Council AAS: UA (Librarian) Agreement
- v. A1.5 Soft-tenure Faculty (continuing) / Soft-tenure-track; research, teaching; Council AAS: UA Agreement (Faculty)
- vi. A1.6 Part-time (continuing) Counterparts to A1.1 – A1.5 / Tenure-track; appropriate Council AAS: UA Agreement (Half-time or greater FTE).

2. Additional members with voting privileges

- a. The Chief Librarian of the University, or designate;
- b. The Chief Executive Officer of the Edmonton Public Library (EPL), or designate;
- c. The Provincial Archivist of the Provincial Archives of Alberta or President of ARMA, Edmonton Chapter (rotating vote);
- d. The Director, Public Library Services, Library Services Branch, Municipal Affairs; and

- e. One (1) representative for all SLIS Academic Teaching Staff (ATS) and SLIS Adjunct Faculty (includes only teaching ATS instructors and teaching adjunct faculty for the current academic year).
- f. The School Council Secretary, as appointed by the Assistant Chair.

3. Students and Alumni with voting privileges

- a. One (1) SLIS Alumnus/Alumna from the Library and Information Studies Alumni Association (LISAA) (President or designate);
- b. Two (2) master's level SLIS student representatives from the Library and Information Studies Student Association (LISSA) (normally the President & Vice-president, or otherwise nominated); and
- c. One (1) SLIS doctoral student representative (subject to PhD enrolment at SLIS).

4. Representatives from University of Alberta Faculties with voting privileges (may vary by year)

- a. One (1) from the Digital Humanities program of the Faculty of Arts (Appointed by the Dean of Arts); and
- b. One (1) from the Faculty of Education (Elected by Faculty members)
- c. One (1) from the MBA Program, Alberta School of Business (Associate Dean, MBA Programs)

5. Non-voting members

- a. SLIS Adjunct Faculty;
- b. SLIS Academic Teaching Staff;
- c. University Libraries (SLIS Library Liaison);
- d. Library Association of Alberta (LAA) (Councillor liaison); and
- e. Greater Edmonton Library Association (GELA)

Officers

The officers shall be the School's Chair, who shall chair SLIS School Council, the SLIS Assistant Chair or equivalent, who will provide an appropriate level of administrative support to SLIS School Council, and the School Council Secretary. The School Council Secretary shall be appointed by the Assistant Chair as a voting member of SLIS School Council.

Quorum

The quorum for SLIS School Council meetings shall be more than half of the voting members.

Meetings

SLIS School Council shall meet a minimum of once per academic year with additional meetings at the discretion of the Chair. Meetings shall be held upon the summons of the Chair. At least one month before a meeting, notice of a SLIS School Council meeting shall be sent (by email) to all members of SLIS School Council by the Secretary. One week before a meeting, a second notice of a SLIS School Council meeting and its agenda shall be sent (by email) to all members of SLIS School Council by the Secretary.

An exceptional meeting of SLIS School Council can be called by the Chair to consider an urgent item of business and must be convened within two weeks. Provisions governing exceptional meetings are the same as for regular meetings except that the agenda is restricted to the item of business for which the meeting was called. In unusual or extenuating circumstances, virtual meetings shall be held and all relevant votes shall be submitted electronically.

Responsibilities

SLIS School Council will:

- Examine and approve proposed new programs, course changes and program changes prior to submission to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for approval.

And, in addition, will be empowered to advise on:

- The mission, goals, and objectives of the School and the MLIS program;
- Policy on internal department matters consistent with Faculty and University policy;
- Matters of policy relating to the School and its programs;
- Stakeholder committees established to exercise its powers, as necessary; and
- The rules and regulations for governing the procedures and composition of SLIS School Council.

Procedures

Meetings of SLIS School Council shall be conducted in accordance with the Bylaws of Procedure adopted by SLIS School Council. The Bylaws of the Council shall be approved by the Council.

Approvals

Approved by SLIS School Council via electronic vote. Voting was open through the end of December 2020.

Bylaws of Procedure for SLIS School Council

SLIS School Council procedures are based on those established by General Faculties Council (GFC). GFC voted against adopting Robert's Rules of Order. GFC is governed, instead, by precedent and, in situations not covered by precedent, GFC is guided by the Chair, whose rulings are subject to challenge. Relevant sections of GFC policy concerning rules of meetings and adapted for use of SLIS School Council are identified below (see GFC 28 OCT 1974).

1. Chair

The Chair of the School shall chair SLIS School Council.

2. Meetings

Meetings of SLIS School Council are open to members and specific guests. Meetings are normally held in-person on the University of Alberta North Campus. Members are expected to attend in-person whenever possible. In circumstances where participants are not able to physically attend virtual participation is permitted. Wholly virtual meetings may be held if deemed necessary for operational or practical purposes. Members may join meetings by means of teleconference, videoconference or other accessible virtual platforms. Members who participate in a meeting by such means are deemed to be present at the meeting.

2.1. Guests

Specific guests may be invited by the Chair to attend and speak to certain agenda items. Members who wish a guest to be invited for a given agenda item shall inform the Chair well in advance of the meeting date and in time for this to be recorded in the agenda. Non-participating observers may attend meetings subject to the will of SLIS School Council and the discretion of the Chair.
(CFGSR 1991/3/15)

2.2. Alternates

Generally, there will be no provision for alternates for voting or non-voting members except for those members who are permitted to send a designate. The President and the Dean shall be permitted to send alternates to the meetings. Alternates shall have full voting rights and the right to propose motions.

2.3. In Camera

In camera may be used to describe a closed meeting (non-members not permitted), which covers information not reflected in the Action Summaries and not available to the public. Such sessions may discuss personnel, financial or other sensitive decisions that must be kept secret (for example, a strategic change which the faculty does not yet want the public to know about). (EFC Feb 2 2010)

2.4. Duration

The agenda for SLIS School Council meetings shall be set in the expectation that the meeting will not exceed three hours in length. If this time is exceeded, the meeting shall be immediately adjourned unless the Chair and a majority vote of members present agree to an extension. (CFGSR 1991/3/15)

3. Membership Policies

3.1. Voting Members

Voting members may participate in discussions and may move, second and vote on motions (EFC Jun 8 2010).

3.2. Non-Voting Members

Non-voting members in regular attendance at meetings may participate in discussion, but cannot move, second or vote on motions (EFC Jun 8, 2010).

3.3. Guests

Guests may be invited to attend a particular meeting and to participate in discussion related to a specific item they were invited to address. Guests cannot move, second or vote on motions. (EFC Jun 8 2010).

3.4. Vacancies

In the case of a vacancy in appointed membership which may occur during the year, a new member from the appropriate constituency shall be appointed by the Chair to fill the unexpired term.

4. Voting

4.1. Proxy Voting

Proxy voting is not permitted for meetings of SLIS School Council.

4.2. Electronic Voting

Electronic voting by email, Google Form, or other means is permitted as required. Voting on motions during a meeting shall take place as described in §4.3 “Voting Procedures.” Electronic voting conducted after a meeting is adjourned must be completed, within a reasonable timeframe, before the next scheduled meeting.

4.3. Voting Procedures

When every member who wishes to speak on a motion has done so, the Chair shall call for a vote. Voting during meetings shall normally be conducted by show of hands and/or voice unless some other method is decided upon by motion. This procedure applies regardless of in-person or virtual attendance.

Voting shall be by majority vote except on a ‘Motion to Rescind’ without previous notice, when a two-thirds vote of those present is required. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

Each voting member of SLIS School Council shall have one vote.

4.4. Chair

The Chair shall normally vote only in the instance of a tie vote. When there is a tie vote, the motion is lost if the Chair abstains. The motion is adopted if the Chair votes in the affirmative and is defeated if the Chair votes in the negative. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

4.5. Guests

Guests cannot move, second or vote on motions. (EFC Jun 8 2010).

4.6. Temporary Staff (ATS and Adjunct) Vote

One voting member shall be appointed by the Chair for a one-year term observing the recommended ratio of one Academic Teaching Staff (ATS) (Category A2.1) per 25 full-time, continuing faculty (Category A1.1) (EXEC 01 MAR 1999). This voting member shall represent all ATS instructors and teaching adjunct faculty employed for the current academic year.

4.7. Rotating Vote

On a rotating basis, one member selected from one of the following stakeholder groups shall be granted voting rights on SLIS School Council, changing each calendar year: The Provincial Archives of Alberta (Provincial Archivist); President of ARMA, Edmonton Chapter.

4.8. Voting Results

The results of all votes taken at meetings shall be announced by the Secretary. The results of votes (i.e., exact number of votes in favour, opposed, or abstained) shall not be recorded in the Action Summaries. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

4.9. Voting Responsibilities

All voting members of SLIS School Council are responsible for thoroughly examining issues before Council meetings and voting as they judge fit on such issues. No member of SLIS School Council, regardless of how that individual gains membership on the Council, is an instructed delegate. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

5. Agenda

5.1. Responsibility for the Agenda

The authority to decide which items are to appear on a SLIS School Council agenda resides with the Chair.

Agenda items, including the wording of proposed motions (if applicable) shall be submitted in written form and delivered to the Secretary of SLIS School Council no later than one week in advance of the meeting for which the item is being submitted.

5.2. Order of Business

At least the following business shall be observed by the Chair at regular meetings:

1. Approval of the agenda;
2. Disposing of the Action Summaries from the last regular meeting and any intervening exceptional meetings;
3. Reports of standing committees and ad hoc committees;
4. Formal business arising from the action summaries; and
5. New business:
6. Announcements;
7. Question period; and
8. Other business.

5.3. Agenda Approval

Approval of the agenda requires a majority vote.

When the Agenda is being approved, the Chair will entertain a request to change the order, for specified reasons. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

New items cannot be introduced at SLIS School Council meetings except by a majority vote of those present. In cases where the Chair or Secretary has been informed in advance of a request to add a new item, the proposal shall be circulated, time permitting, to members. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

5.4. Agenda Distribution

The Agenda and supporting documents for the bi-annual and any additional meetings shall be distributed by electronic means at least one week before the meeting is to be held.

6. Action Summaries

Action summaries of the previous SLIS School Council meetings shall be approved as submitted or approved as amended by a motion.

Action summaries of SLIS School Council meetings shall record only matters raised and the actions taken not what was said. Action summaries shall include the date of the meeting and names of members present.

The record of discussion shall reflect fully the basis of decisions. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

Action Summaries of SLIS School Council meetings shall indicate what further action may be called for on any matter discussed.

Draft action summaries will be distributed electronically within two weeks of meetings to all members of SLIS School Council. Original agendas and supporting material will be archived for historical reference. SLIS School Council agendas, action summaries and memberships shall be made available to the public. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

7. Motions

A motion is a formal proposal that the assembly take certain action. To make a motion, a member must obtain the floor, that is, the member must be recognized by the Chair. (In the interest of clarity, it is advisable to write out a motion in advance; giving a copy to the Secretary usually expedites business.) The person making a motion will be invited by the Chair to speak first in any ensuing debate. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A motion must be seconded. A second merely implies that the seconder agrees that the motion should be debated and not that the seconder necessarily favours the motion. If

no seconder is found, the motion is dead and the meeting moves on to other business. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

7.1. Notice of Motion

A Notice of Motion is a method of informing the membership in advance of the intention to make a specific motion. When Notice of Motion has first been given at a SLIS School Council meeting, the Chair will decide whether it is appropriate that such a motion be placed on the Agenda of the next meeting. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

Notice of Motion from an individual shall normally be forwarded to the Chair of SLIS School Council/Secretary no later than three weeks before a meeting in order to have the motion included on the agenda of the meeting at which it is to be considered.

7.2. Amendment to a Motion

An amendment is a subsidiary motion. It is used to modify the wording - and within certain limits the meaning - of a pending motion before the pending motion itself is voted upon. Its adoption does not adopt the motion thereby amended, and its rejection leaves the pending motion unaltered. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

The amendment must be germane; that is, it must be closely related to or have bearing on the subject of the motion. No new subject can be introduced under the pretext of being an amendment. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

An amendment must be seconded and is debatable. Such debate must be confined to the desirability of the amendment and must not extend to the merits of the motion to be amended, except as may be necessary to determine whether the amendment is advisable. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

An amendment can be amended, by a motion to amend the amendment. A majority vote is required. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

The mover with the consent of the seconder may incorporate a 'friendly' amendment into the main motion if the mover and seconder of the amendment are agreeable. The Chair has discretion to adjudicate challenges to the status of the friendly amendment. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

7.3. Motion to Table

A Motion to Table enables SLIS School Council to lay aside the pending question until some future time. A Motion to Table must be seconded, cannot be debated and requires a majority vote. The mover may make a brief statement on what

information they believe would be necessary to lift an item from the table, followed by the proposer of the original item, who may make a brief comment to SLIS School Council on the impact of tabling the motion. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

7.4. Motion to Take From Table

A 'Motion to Take' from the Table is a motion to bring back before SLIS School Council the matter laid aside. Such a motion must be seconded, cannot be debated and requires a majority vote. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

7.5. Motion to Reconsider

A Motion to Reconsider enables SLIS School Council, within a limited time and without notice, to bring back for further consideration a motion that has already been voted on. The effect of a Motion to Reconsider is to restore proceedings to the point immediately prior to the vote to which it applies. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A Motion to Reconsider must be brought forward at the same or next calendar month's meeting, after which Motion to Rescind procedures must be followed. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A Notice of Motion to Reconsider must be provided with at least ten (10) working days notice if the Motion to Reconsider does not take place at the same meeting. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A Motion to Reconsider must be seconded and is amendable. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A Motion to Reconsider is debatable, unless the motion to which it applies was not debatable. Debate may pertain to reasons for reconsideration only. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A simple majority vote is required. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

An approved Motion to Reconsider suspends action on the original motion to which it applies until the original motion has been decided upon. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A motion can be reconsidered only once. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A motion which has already been acted upon cannot be reconsidered. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

7.6. Motion to Rescind

A Motion to Rescind is the motion by which a previous act or order can be cancelled or reversed. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A Motion to Rescind is only used when a Motion to Reconsider is out of time. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A Motion to Rescind must be seconded, and is amendable. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A Motion to Rescind is debatable, unless the motion to which it applies was not debatable. Debate may pertain to reasons for reconsideration only. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A Motion to Rescind requires a Notice of Motion provided to Council membership with at least ten (10) working days notice. A two thirds majority vote of those present is required. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

7.7. Motion to Adjourn

A 'Motion to Adjourn' is a motion to close the meeting. It must be seconded, is not debatable or amendable and requires a majority vote. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

8. Debate Procedures

8.1. Interrupting a Speaker

A member who has the floor may not normally be interrupted. However, the Chair may interrupt a speaker if the speaker is out of order by using unacceptable language, is abusive of other members, or is not speaking to the motion. If the Chair does not do so, a member may raise this as a point of order. A speaker may not be interrupted because the listener does not agree with what is being said. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

8.2. Calling the Question

Calls of "Question!" by members from their seats are informal expressions of individual members' desires to proceed to a vote on the matter under discussion. (Such calls are disorderly if made while another member is speaking.) Upon hearing such a call, the Chair will ask members if they are ready to vote on the motion being discussed. If there appears to be opposition to closing the debate, the Chair may ask for a motion to close debate. If seconded, eligible members will then vote on this motion and proceed accordingly. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

8.3. Challenging the Chair

The Chair may allow debate on a point of order before making a ruling. The Chair should state the basis on which such a ruling is made and no debate thereon is permitted. When the Chair rules on a question of procedure, any member may

rise and state to the Chair, "I respectfully appeal to SLIS School Council from your ruling."

The Chair will respond by stating, "The Council has heard the ruling of the Chair. The question is: Shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained?" This issue is then put to a vote. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

8.4. Committee of the Whole

Debate should be either for or against a motion. However, an issue may arise which is not so clear-cut or for which the rules may seem to be a hindrance. In such a case, a motion that SLIS School Council resolve itself into a Council of the Whole may be made. If carried, the visitors are asked to leave the Chamber, the Chair steps down and another Chair is appointed or elected for the duration of the meeting of the Council of the Whole. Action summaries are not taken and members may speak more freely and informally. A motion need not be seconded in order to be discussed. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

When the Council of the Whole reaches agreement, a motion is made "that the Chair rise and report," upon the adoption of which motion the Council of the Whole is dissolved, the Chair of SLIS School Council resumes the Chair and the Chair of the Council of the Whole reports to the Chair of SLIS School Council the action taken by the Council of the Whole. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

8.5. Special Debate

Special debate can be declared by the Chair in cases where there is very active debate that is monopolized by a few speakers, but multiple participants wish to speak. In a special debate, no member may speak for a second time until the Chair is satisfied that all those wishing to speak for the first time have done so. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

8.6. Point of Order

It is the right of every member who notices a breach of the rules of the Council to insist on their enforcement. If the Chair fails to notice such a breach, any member may make the appropriate Point of Order, calling on the Chair for a ruling. If the Chair, being in doubt, refers the point of order to the judgment of the Council, it thereby becomes debatable. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A Point of Order is the only time when a member is allowed to interrupt a speaker who has the floor. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A Point of Order does not require a seconder, it is not debatable (except in the circumstance noted above), it is not amendable, and cannot be reconsidered. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

A Point of Order should not be raised which has nothing to do with procedure and is merely a tactic to say something which would not normally be allowed. (EFC Feb 2 2010)

9. Committees

SLIS School Council may establish new committees or subcommittees. School Council or the delegate body shall provide clear, explicit, and detailed terms of reference for approval by School Council.

Amendments to the terms of reference for committees and subcommittees of SLIS School Council shall be brought to School Council for approval. Only School Council has the authority to dissolve committees or subcommittees of School Council.

The Council may delegate authority to its committees but these shall be responsible to the Council. Unless otherwise approved by Council, subcommittees shall report to committees.

10. Secretary

The School Council Secretary shall be appointed by the Assistant Chair as a voting member of the Council.

The following are the main duties of the School Council Secretary:

- To serve SLIS School Council by arranging all meetings, preparing agendas, recording meetings, and ensuring that comprehensive documentation, including an outline of the issues, is distributed.
- To ensure that action summaries concerning all meetings of SLIS School Council are available.
- To provide advice and support pertaining to governance matters, as required.

11. Amendments

11.1. Amendments of Bylaws

These Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of SLIS School Council by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, prior to which there has been seven (7) days notice of the proposed amendment before the meeting.

11.2. Amendment of Terms of Reference

SLIS School Council terms of reference may be amended at any regular meeting by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, prior to which there has been seven (7) days notice of the proposed amendment before the meeting.

11.3. Review of Terms of Reference

Terms of reference for SLIS School Council will be reviewed every two years or sooner, as required.

12. Impeachment

No member of SLIS School Council can be impeached. (EFC Feb 2 2010).