



# UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

## UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council  
Council on Students Affairs  
Approved Open Session Minutes

Thursday, January 13, 2022  
Zoom  
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

---

### **ATTENDEES:**

Steven Dew, Chair  
Ghalia Aamer  
Chiara Concini  
André Costopoulos  
Maddie Dempsey  
Devin Doherty  
Anas Fassih  
Kathy Haddakar  
Keith King  
Mohit Kumar  
Jesse Lafontaine

Rowan Ley  
Maggie Lin  
Melissa Padfield  
Chanpreet Singh  
Cindy Sun  
Alan Underhill  
Adrian Wattamaniuk  
Non-Voting  
Kate Peters

### **REGRETS**

Anastasia Elias  
Brad Hamdon  
  
Scribe  
Heather Richholt

### **OPENING SESSION**

Before opening the meeting the Chair read the following territorial recognition:

*The University of Alberta resides on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis.  
This territory is a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples whose histories, languages and cultures continue to influence our community.  
To acknowledge the territory is to recognize the longer history of these lands.  
The acknowledgement signifies our commitment to working in Good Relations with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples as we engage in our institutional work, uplifting the whole people, for the University for Tomorrow.*

1 Approval of the Agenda

*Presenter(s):* Steven Dew, Council on Student Affairs (COSA) Chair, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

**Motion: Padfield/Ley**

THAT the Council on Student Affairs approve the Open Session agenda of January 13, 2022.

**CARRIED.**

2. Approval of the open session minutes of November 4, 2021

*Presenter(s):* Steven Dew, COSA Chair, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Motion: Underhill/Ley

THAT the Council on Student Affairs approve the Open Session minutes of November 4, 2021.

**CARRIED.**

3. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

*Presenter(s):* Steven Dew, COSA Chair, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

*Discussion:* The Chair asked Andrew Sharman, the Executive lead of the Public Health Response Team (PHRT) for an update on the changes to public health regulation and the University response to COVID. Mr Sharman confirmed the University is planning to provide a firm date for a return to in-person classes and that the decision will balance with the need to dedensify on-campus activities, to comply with public health regulations, and to support the student experience. He asked Ms Padfield to provide an update on the reconstitution of the Academic Impacts Team of the PHRT who are providing advice on the academic impacts of decision making.

The Chair allowed for questions and members asked about plans for replacing instructors who may not be able to resume classes, and if courses that are currently in person would continue. Mr Sharman noted that the University is hoping to avoid a repeat of the March 2020 pivot and that modeling is being used to support a decision to delay the return to in person that will can provide necessary relief to the health system but some certainty to members of the community.

Members asked about the change to the add/delete deadline and Ms Padfield confirmed there would be an extension and that the date would be communicated tomorrow. Students expressed a concern about the change to the add deadline may have a negative impact on some students who are currently on waitlists for courses.

In response to a request for information on online course information and the possibility of incentives to ensure that courses do return to in-person teaching, Ms Padfield spoke to the work that the AIT will be doing to provide additional resources to smooth the transition.

Members discussed the issues faced by international students who may be questioning whether they should return home early. Mr Sharman confirmed that the communication would clarify for students the expectation that the University would return to inperson clases.

The safety of students in a post-pandemic situation was discussed including possible changes to infrastructure to improve air quality on Campus. Mr Sharman noted that there had been considerable work in the summer and fall on all the main buildings and pointed members to the minimum standards that are published on the Facilities and Operations website.

The Chair allowed for feedback from students on meeting times at the request of the GFC Secretary and a member noted that 5-7PM might be better adapted to the needs of students.

In closing, the Chair noted that Andre Costopoulos would be on leave for the next six months and that Helen Vallianatos would be stepping into the role in his absence, including on COSA.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

4. Annual Report on Undergraduate Enrolment 2021-22

*Presenter(s):* Melissa Padfield, Vice-Provost and Registrar, Office of the Registrar

*Purpose of the Proposal:* To discuss the Annual Report on Undergraduate Enrolment

*Discussion:* Ms Padfield noted that this was the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Report on Undergraduate Enrolment and that the report is an important reflection of the community and the student body. In summarising the report, she reminded members that the Enrolment Management Policy lays out the authority and the vision for coordinating enrolment. The report represents a snapshot of the student body in a point in time (December 1, 2021). The key components

of the report include total enrolment, student intake, admissions and registration, and student retention and completion. She noted the unique impacts of COVID-19 that influenced the 2021-2022 enrolment cycle and provided information on student demographics and noted that this report includes data collected from students who now have the ability to self-identify. Ms Padfield explained that access is measured by the admission rate which decreased year over year due to a large applicant pool that can be explained by the constraints on space. She further noted that there was no evidence of the vaccine mandate having a negative impact on enrolment; rather, a positive impact attributed to COVID has been observed in increased completion rates. Looking forward, Ms Padfield emphasized the importance of the institutional enrolment objectives and the University's goals for equity, diversity and inclusion.

Members asked about the use of the term "gender", the possible conflation with sex (male/female) and plans for use of data for enrolment management. Ms Padfield noted the constraints of compliance with federal and provincial data requirements and the ongoing efforts of the University, through different units and services such as the Landing, to make the University a more welcoming and inclusive environment. She also confirmed that at this point, there are no targets for gender-based recruitment; however, she relayed examples of faculty-based initiatives (such as women in Engineering or men in Nursing). The Provost spoke to some of the institutional strategies to support gender diversification across the University, for example through better balance on the professoriate side.

International student enrolment was discussed and members inquired about targets for international student enrolment and country-specific goals. The Registrar confirmed that international enrolment numbers were stable, however domestic enrolment is growing faster than international admissions and the data shows an change in proportionality, rather than a decrease. The Provost provided information on informal targets, explaining that the nominal number is around 15% and the University would like to maintain that. The growth opportunities for the University include expanding enrolment, including international enrolment and that there is strong demand for the University of Alberta programs.

The yield rate was discussed and members requested details on International yield. The Registrar confirmed that the yield rate for International students is different and that there have been positive shifts in pockets of international students, for example, a strong increase in international students from India.

##### 5. Student Communications on Experiential Learning

*Presenter(s):* Abner Monteiro, Vice-President (Academic), Students' Union ; Karsten Mundel, Provost Fellow, Experiential and Work-Integrated Learning

*Purpose of the Proposal:* The proposal is before the committee for early consultation on communication with students who face negative experiences over the course of their experiential learning placements

*Discussion:* Abner Monteiro spoke to the challenges faced by some students during their experiential learning opportunities. He articulated some of the issues that may be experienced by students and the possibility of creating tools and resources for students to better communicate how to navigate these often complex situations.

Members provided feedback to the proponents including, but not limited to:

- The Recruitment process as an opportunity to communicate to students the supports available, especially for students looking at co-op programs in industries where there may be equity issues;
- The role of co-op offices, students services, and individual faculty supports and that they should make it clear that there are supports available and make them accessible to students;
- That providing resources for instructors is equally important as they may be important touch points for students;
- The value of articulating processes in the agreements with employers or experiential learning sites to make explicit the roles and responsibilities for students, the employer and the University;

- Precedents for the use of a button in the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry to encourage professional behaviour and that this hasn't often been useful in solving the issues from the student perspective;
- Creating clarity and consistency across the institution should be a priority but that there are seldom resolutions that meet the students' needs;
- How to create a transparent process, so that even though the outcomes are rarely to the satisfaction of the student, the student and the instructor have been provided with adequate resources
- That having online or easily accessible communications points would be beneficial;
- Whether it would be possible to share information on specific cases with students to support them in their own decision making (without sharing personal information);
- The inherent issue of power imbalance and that these experiences can happen at any point in the student journey, from the interview to the final assessment;
- Whether this was an undergraduate or graduate issue and that the communication can come from a variety of places including email signatures, eClass and the University website.
- That, as the University restructures, one of the objectives is to try and provide a more consistent place to start any student request for information or support – a one-stop place to look for resources;
- A desire to make these processes as simple as possible and a request for advice on how best to communicate the information; and
- How to balance the different information needs from diverse audiences (instructors vs students vs administrators) as well as the contextual differences in each faculty.

## 6. Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy

*Presenter(s):* Wendy Rodgers, Deputy Provost, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

*Purpose of the Proposal:* The proposal is before the committee to provide a final version of the policy suite, and continue discussions related to the advancement of the Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation Policy for the University of Alberta.

*Discussion:* The Chair provided some context and reminded members that this proposal will be coming to GFC for approval in the coming months.

Dr Wendy Rodgers presented on behalf of the proponent, John Nychka, the Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning). She reminded members that the suite is being developed to replace the GFC Policy Manual Section 111, which is a collage of different policy statements and requirements for teaching, learning and evaluation of teaching. She noted that the support of students has been critical in development of the policy framework and that their feedback about the format of delivery and different strategies to enhance participation had been collected through consultation. She presented some of the issues including bias in the questions and the way the tools are presented to students and provided a preview of the 19 Student Perspectives of Teaching, or "SPOT", questions that are currently being reviewed. Dr Rodgers concluded by clarifying next steps and emphasizing that the questions are not subject to approval with the full policy suite at GFC in the coming months but will come back after a process of development and testing.

The Chair opened the floor for questions and members contributed feedback, opinions and questions including:

- How the University of Alberta compared to U15 counterparts in terms of questions;
- How the information is collected and used in evaluation of instructors and in promotion and tenure processes; and
- That the use of a theoretical framework to support the development of questions and the use of scholar expertise to develop and test the questions would potentially make the University of Alberta a leader in this area.

## 7. Updates (no documents)

## 8. A. Students' Union

*Presenter(s):* Rowan Ley, President, UA Students' Union, Students' Union, University of Alberta

*Discussion:* Mr Ley had no new updates but noted that renovations in the Students' Union Building (SUB) continue and the cafeteria is currently closed due to asbestos removal. The Students' Union is currently focused on preparing for the provincial budget announcement and preparing several items for a referendum including the student legal service fee that would be used to create a student name-change service. He reminded COSA members about the upcoming elections and noted there is an excellent slate of candidates.

There was no discussion.

#### B. Graduate Students' Association

*Presenter(s):* Kathy Haddakar, Vice-President (Academic), Graduate Students' Association

*Discussion:* The GSA is working to obtain central funding for additional graduate services in a multi-year project. In addition, the GSA is working to develop new graduate bursaries. Finally, Ms Haddakar provided background and information on a communication project that will broaden the outreach of the GSA through videos that clarify the role of the GSA in serving graduate students.

#### 9. Question Period

There were no questions.

### **INFORMATION REPORTS**

10. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings  
- Request for Feedback - Indigenous Strategic Plan

### **CLOSING SESSION**

11. Adjournment
  - Next meeting: March 3, 2022
  - Next meeting of GFC: January 31, 2022

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:45**