



General Faculties Council  
Executive Committee  
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, October 04, 2021  
Zoom Virtual Meeting  
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

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**ATTENDEES:**

Bill Flanagan, Chair  
Ghalia Aamer  
Jason Acker  
J Nelson Amaral  
Heather Coleman  
Steven Dew  
Anastasia Elias

Kathy Haddadkar  
Nat Kav  
Pierre-Yves Mocquais  
Abner Monterio  
Melissa Padfield  
Jerine Pegg  
Moin Yahya

*non-voting:*  
Brad Hamdon  
Kate Peters

Staff:  
Heather Richholt, Scribe

**OPENING SESSION**

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 Executive Committee (Exec)

*Discussion:*

Before calling the meeting to order the Chair read the following territorial acknowledgement:

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.

The Chair noted that the committee was continuing to use the new section of the agenda, Preparation of the GFC Agenda, for items that Exec was asked to consider only for the purpose of preparing the GFC agenda. He noted that the GFC Secretary had not received any requests to discuss items 9, 10, or 11 but asked if members had any concerns about these items.

Members discussed the new practice, the timing and availability of materials, and drawing distinction between items going to GFC for action and for discussion.

A member asked when Exec would recommend on items going forward to GFC for decision. The Chair replied that Exec would discuss and recommend on items going forward to GFC when those items related to the committee's delegated authority and responsibilities.

Motion: Padfield/Kav

THAT GFC Executive Committee approve the agenda.

**CARRIED**

2. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

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

*Discussion*:

In his remarks, the Chair made note of the following:

- Welcome to new committee member;
- COVID-19 vaccine directive and the CampusReady Pass;
- Lunch and Learn session on the GFC Meeting Procedural Rules;
- The Chair's memo to GFC on the Meeting Procedural Rules; and
- Executive's Subcommittee on Governance and Procedural Oversight.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Consent Agenda Mover and Seconder: Acker/Coleman

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of Sept 13, 2021

THAT GFC Executive Committee approve the open session minutes of September 13, 2021.

**CARRIED**

**ACTION ITEMS**

4. Decommission of Section 65.3 (University of Alberta Student Housing Policy) from the General Faculties Council (GFC) Policy Manual

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s)*: Katherine Husing, Associate Vice President, Campus Services

*Discussion*:

The Chair noted that this item was part of the institution's work to move the GFC Policy Manual into the University of Alberta Policies and Procedures Online (UAPPOL).

Ms Husing spoke about the work that had been done since this item was tabled in 2015. She explained that all of the elements in the policy were now addressed within other university policies and that the old GFC policy was out of date and should be rescinded.

A member asked whether a clear and updated policy could be created to replace this policy instead of rescinding it. Ms Husing noted that having parallel policies was generally not a good practice. She provided the example of the Sexual Violence Policy in UAPPOL which applied to the entire University across all campuses and noted that it should not be different for residences.

In response to a question, Ms Husing noted that the relevant policies as listed in the Governance Executive Summary would be available on the residences website.

Motion: Coleman/Amaral

THAT the GFC Executive Committee take the item from the table.

**CARRIED**

Motion: Padfield/Mocquais

THAT the GFC Executive Committee recommend that General Faculties Council approve, the deletion of Section 65.3 (University of Alberta Student Housing Policy) of the GFC Policy Manual, to take effect upon final approval.

**CARRIED**

5. 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, and co-chair of the GFC Executive *ad hoc* Governance Procedural Review Committee

*Discussion*:

The Chair reminded members that this item was before them because of the responsibility the GFC Executive Committee held to recommend on changes related to governance and procedural oversight.

Mr Hamdon provided an overview of the work of the Executive *ad hoc* Governance Procedural Review Committee in the spring of 2021, the feedback received from forty GFC members, and the commitment to a regular three-year review of guiding documents and committee terms of reference. Mr Hamdon highlighted proposed changes to the voting rules, the integration of the question period procedure, and clarification as to when a simple majority or a two-thirds majority was appropriate.

Members discussed:

- the required votes for a motion to table, an amendment to a motion, and a motion to add a new item to the agenda;
- whether new members of GFC had been given enough time to consider the proposed changes; and
- a request for clarification about raising a point of order and challenging the ruling of the Chair.

Motion: Acker/Kav

THAT GFC Executive Committee recommend that General Faculties Council approve the proposed changes to the Principles for GFC Standing Committee Composition, Roles and Responsibilities of Members, and Meeting Procedural Rules as set forth in attachments 1, 2, and 3 to take effect upon approval.

**CARRIED**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

6. UASU & GSA Goals

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s)*: Anas Fassih, President, Graduate Students' Association (GSA); Rowan Ley, President, University of Alberta Students' Union (UASU)

*Discussion*:

The President of the USAU presented the executive goals and priorities for 2021-2022 within the following themes:

- boost academic advocacy and bolster student leadership;
- foster an equitable, inclusive, and diverse campus;
- ensure student voices shape the future; and
- lead the charge on sustainability.

The President of the GSA provided an overview of the Board Strategic Work Plan 2021-2022 and the GSA's work to advocate for and support graduate students, noting consideration of the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic and changes resulting from Academic Restructuring and the Service Excellence Transformation.

7. Question Period (no documents)

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

*Discussion:*

A member asked how he could arrange to have an item discussed at the Executive Committee. The GFC Secretary, Kate Peters replied that members of Exec should work with her if they wanted the committee to discuss an item.

A member asked about the volunteer governance advisor, his role and responsibilities, and reporting structure. General Counsel and University Secretary, Brad Hamdon explained that the advisor reported to him and had responsibility for providing advice to the GFC Secretary on governance and procedural matters.

8. Feedback from Members on GFC Meetings

- Application of the GFC Meeting Procedural Rules
- Use of *Robert's Rules of Order*
- Equity and Extension of Meetings

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* Bill Flanagan, President and Vice-Chancellor, and Chair of Exec; Kate Peters, GFC Secretary and Manager of GFC Services

*Discussion:*

The Chair noted that there had been several concerns raised by members related to procedural complexity at GFC meetings and equity issues associated with meeting extensions.

Ms Peters spoke about:

- the frustration expressed by members about the amount of time spent on procedural matters;
- the impact of extending the meetings for members who had care and other responsibilities;
- that the meeting schedule for GFC was established and published well in advance but the rules did allow for extension of meetings;
- that complex issues coming to GFC may simply take longer in the remote meeting environment;
- the increased use of *Robert's Rules of Order* as opposed to the GFC Meeting Procedural Rules; and
- that the Meeting Procedural Rules were meant to support participation and to facilitate inclusive and respectful dialogue.

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

- commitments in members' schedules beyond GFC;
- that 25 minutes to approve an agenda was excessive;
- Exec's responsibility to prepare the agenda and to consider timing;
- that delaying and postponing important issues that needed to come to GFC was problematic;
- the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the University of Alberta for Tomorrow initiatives on academic governance;
- whether meetings could be scheduled from one to three o'clock, instead of two to four o'clock;
- challenges related to the remote meeting platform and members being interrupted or not having an opportunity to speak;
- whether some issues could be addressed by Exec in advance rather than settled on the floor of GFC;

- the importance of striking the proper balance between GFC members who wish to bring items forward to GFC and the need for efficient decision making;
- an opinion that GFC was a "rubber stamp" for only "sanctioned" proposals that were brought forward by administration;
- an opinion that the thoughtful and careful work of the GFC standing committees was essential and did not run counter to the democratic process; and
- a suggestion to highlight the work of the GFC standing committees on proposals that go forward to GFC.

### **PREPARATION OF THE GFC AGENDA**

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

9. **Action: Proposed Suspension of Majors for the Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Education Combined Degrees Program, Augustana Faculty, and Faculty of Education**

There was no discussion.

10. **Discussion: Institutional Indigenous Strategic Plan**

There was no discussion.

11. **Discussion: Residence Community Standards Policy**

There was no discussion.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

12. **Draft Agenda for the Next Meeting of General Faculties Council**

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

Motion: Mocquais/Dew

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the Agenda for the September 20, 2021 meeting of General Faculties Council, as set forth in Attachment 1, as amended.

**CARRIED**

### **CLOSING SESSION**

13. **Adjournment**  
- Next Meeting of Exec: November 15, 2021  
- Next Meeting of GFC: October 25, 2021

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:45 p.m.