



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council
Academic Planning Committee
Approved Open Session Minutes

Wednesday, September 22, 2021
Zoom Virtual Meeting
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Steven Dew, Chair
Chris Andersen
Chris Beasley
Heather Bruce
Shannon Erichsen
Anas Fassih
Todd Gilchrist
Jelena Holovati

Vadim Kravchinsky
Jacqueline Leighton
Rowan Ley
Melissa Padfield
Sanhita Pal
Laura Beard (Delegate)
non-voting:
Kate Peters

REGRETS:

Sandeep Agrawal
Brad Hamdon
Runjuan Liu
Yan Yuan

Staff:

Heather Richholt, Assistant
Secretary to GFC

Before opening the meeting, the Chair read the following territorial acknowledgement:

The University of Alberta resides on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. To acknowledge the territory is to recognize the longer history of these lands and signifies our commitment to working in Good Relations with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples as we engage in our institutional work.

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and Chair of GFC Academic Planning Committee (APC)

Discussion:

The Chair that numerous observers had joined the meeting for the discussion item on the restructuring of the Faculty of Education and proposed a modification to the order of agenda items to place that item ahead of the Exceptional Tuition discussion as item 8. He also provided information on the closed session for item 11.

Motion: Leighton/Andersen

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve the agenda.

CARRIED

2. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and Chair of APC

Discussion: The Chair made note of the following:

- Changes in the University regulations in response to COVID 19 including a mandatory vaccine requirement as per the decision of the Chief Medical Officer.

- In response to one of the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the University will observe the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to “honour Survivors, their families, and communities, and ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process.” The Chair invited all members of our university community to not only wear an orange shirt on September 30, but also use the day to learn and reflect on the history and ongoing legacy of the Indian residential school system, remember those who lost their lives, and commemorate survivors.
- Given the provincial stay at home mandate, the need to prioritize teaching and learning, and our efforts to minimize density on Campus, the GFC Secretary has paused consideration of moving to a hybrid meeting format for Standing Committees.

3. Committee Orientation

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Kate Peters; Secretary to GFC and Manager, GFC Services, and Heather Richholt, Assistant Secretary to GFC.

Discussion: Ms Peters began by thanking members for their service to GFC and encourage members to use the resources provided in the Governance Executive Summary to find general information on GFC and University Governance. She and Ms Richholt then oriented the committee on:

- The mandate and responsibilities of APC including budget matters, Indigenous policies and initiatives, changes to academic units and quality assurance
- The authority of this committee over academic units and academic service units.
- Their responsibility over academic programs that involve new space or resources, or affect long-range planning, and over program suspensions.

There was no discussion.

CONSENT AGENDA

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Consent Agenda Mover and Seconder: Padfield/Beard

4. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of May 19, 2021

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve the open session minutes of May 19, 2021

CARRIED

5. Proposed Suspension of Majors for the Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Education Combined Degrees Program, Augustana Faculty, and Faculty of Education

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee recommend the proposed suspension of admissions to the majors in Mathematical Sciences, and Physical Sciences, in the Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Education Combined Degree Program (Augustana), to take effect upon approval.

CARRIED

ACTION ITEMS

6. Election of a Vice-Chair (no documents)

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and Chair of APC

Discussion: The Chair explained that the vice-chair of APC will preside when as Provost, the Chair is called upon to step out of the chair as proponent of proposals, as is the case for tuition proposals, for example. He noted that in advance of the meeting, the Secretary to GFC had reached out to returning members of APC to ask if they would consider taking on the role. Jelena Holovati is returning for her final year of service to APC and has agreed to take on the role. The Chair asked if there were any additional nominees and noted that according to the APC terms of reference, nominees should be an academic staff member who is a member of GFC.

No additional nominees were proposed and the Chair congratulated Dr Holovati and thanked her for agreeing to play this role.

7. Department Name Change: Department of History and Classics to Department of History, Classics, and Religion

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Steve Patten, Interim Dean, Faculty of Arts; and Ryan Dunch, Professor Chair, Department of History & Classics, Arts

Discussion: Dean Patten noted that the proposal had been through the appropriate decision-making structures and that there is near unanimous support of the stakeholders in the Faculty of Arts. Department Chair Ryan Dunch emphasized the proposal had the support of the department, described the consultations with other faculties, instructors, and students. In addition, he noted that this department name was quite common in comparator institutions.

Motion: Padfield/Beard

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee, with delegated authority from General Faculties Council, approve changing the name of the Department of History and Classics to the Department of History, Classics, and Religion (HCR).

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

11. Restructuring in the Faculty of Education

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Jennifer Tupper, Dean of the Faculty of Education; Lynn McGarvey, Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Education

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee to provide a briefing on changes to the Faculty of Education department structure that were recently approved by the Education Faculty Council and will be coming before APC for recommendation to the Board.

Discussion:

Dean Tupper noted that the discussions on the item began last year but were also built into the Faculty Strategic plan and that in the current budget situation, the Faculty wanted to lead the process and make its own decisions on a new structure. Vice-Dean Lynn McGarvey made a presentation on the current structure of the faculty, the rationale for making changes, the feedback received throughout the process, and the vision for change.

Committee members asked questions about the consultation of students and their participation on the Faculty Council when the motion to recommend on the proposal was approved. The Dean detailed consultation with students throughout the process including through online town halls and explained the proposed changes do not have any impact on programs. She further noted that the selection of the students to sit on Faculty Council typically takes place after the first meeting has taken place and that one graduate student representative did attend and vote by error.

Members asked about potential gains from the changes especially increasing collaboration and streamlining decision-making. The Dean responded that the need for change predated the budget cuts and pointed to calls to break down silos within the Faculty. She reiterated the vision to increase collaboration and fluidity within the faculty and spoke to proposed changes to decision-making structures, including for program changes and approvals, especially at the course-level.

Members also asked about the creation of pods, whether they would be branded, if they were analogous to schools, and about the responsibilities to be given to the leadership roles who will function effectively as Chairs. The Dean responded that while many of the changes are still being discussed, the intention is to have pieces in place for a July 1, 2022 implementation date. This includes finding individuals who can fill those roles and continue the very collaborative process to implement a new model. The work to better understand the work of the department chairs and consultations on how to transition those responsibilities to two new leadership roles has already begun. There are already several schools within the Faculty.

Members asked about the Faculty Council motion and whether, in the opinion of the proponents, the decision-making had been fair and transparent. The proponents expressed their opinion that it had been and gave information about the motion presented to the Faculty Council.

Members asked about the change management process and the vote at the Faculty Council and the plans for governance and decision making, especially given that the vote was so close. The Dean noted that the Faculty Council's decision does reflect the transformative change that is happening in the Faculty of Education, and that such a transformative change has not been recorded since 1994. The Dean also spoke to some of the mechanisms that the leadership team is looking for to support change management, especially the work of champions within the Faculty and the need for metrics on implementation,

Members expressed support for the courage of the Faculty and wondered about how the pod compositions will be created. The Dean noted that the changes do not change the fact that faculty and students belong to the Faculty of Education and the creation of pods should support increased collaboration which is an overall aim of the proposal. In response to some members expressed concerns related to the lack of definite plans for implementation, the Dean assured members that this could be explained by the nature of the change process which would continue to be consultative and to require collaboration to develop and implement.

In closing, the Chair reminded members they would be asked to recommend to GFC on the restructuring and that the final decision will lay with the Board.

8. 2022-2023 Exceptional Tuition Increase

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Melissa Padfield, Vice-Provost and Registrar, Office of the Registrar, Steven Dew; Provost & Vice-President (Academic), and Todd Gilchrist, Vice-President (University Services and Finance)

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee to provide a briefing on the exceptional tuition increase proposals that will come before the committee in early October for recommendation to the Board

Discussion:

Dr Dew began by providing an overview of the decision-making process for setting tuition and the call for Exceptional Tuition Increase (ETI) Proposals from the Minister the past Spring. The Chair noted that these proposals were discussed by APC in April 2021 and that the final proposals are still being developed by the faculties who are gathering input from students.

Members asked questions about how the programs were chosen and the process to develop them expressing concerns that student consultation had not been meaningful. The Provost provided details on the timelines from Spring 2021 that had led to consultation during a particularly busy time of the academic year. The most recent round of consultation included more diverse approaches in the Faculties with senior faculty leaders being highly engaged in the process.

Members noted that students consulted will not be impacted by the changes, and that they will ultimately touch students who will begin their programs in the 2022 academic year and that because of approval timelines, some applicants may not have all the information when they apply on October 1. The Provost and the Registrar explained plans to inform applicants and that ministerial approval would be obtained at the earliest in December.

9. Growth Strategy – Open Session

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and Chair of APC

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee to provide information about strategies that the institution is engaged in to facilitate growth.

Discussion: The Chair began by explaining his request to move the Committee into closed session noting the need to keep information on enrolment management confidential and the need to inform APC now, before the information can be widely shared.

The Chair moved the meeting into closed session.

10. Future of Continuing Professional Education

Item was deferred

11. Budget Update (no documents)

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost & Vice-President (Academic); Todd Gilchrist, Vice-President (University Services and Finance)

Discussion:

The Chair asked Vice-President Gilchrist to provide a short update concerning the University budget.

There was no discussion.

12. Question Period

There were no questions.

INFORMATION REPORTS

13. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

A. Remote Meeting - First cycle of GFC Standing Committees

CLOSING SESSION

14. Adjournment- Next Meeting of APC: October 6, 2021
- Next Meeting of GFC: October 25, 2021

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.