



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council Executive Committee Open Session Minutes

Monday, April 07, 2014
2-31 South Academic Building (SAB)
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Voting Members:

Carl Amrhein	Chair (Delegate), President
Ed Blackburn	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Petros Kusmu	Member (Delegate), Students' Union Vice-President (Academic)
Lisa Collins	Member, Vice-Provost and University Registrar
Kaori Kabata	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Colin More	Member, Graduate Students' Association Vice-President (Academic)
Norma Nocente	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Steve Patten	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Sean Robertson	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Wendy Rodgers	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Mirko van der Baan	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Jonathan White	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC

Presenter(s):

Carl Amrhein	Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair, GFC Executive Committee
Kathleen Brough	Portfolio Initiatives Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Karen Pollock	Chair, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine

Staff:

Garry Bodnar, Director, General Faculties Council (GFC) Services and Secretary to GFC
Marion Haggarty-France, University Secretary
Andrea Patrick, Scribe

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Carl Amrhein, Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair, GFC Executive Committee

Motion: More/Rodgers

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of March 13, 2014

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file

Presenter: Carl Amrhein, Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair, GFC Executive Committee

Motion: Blackburn/White

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the Minutes of March 13, 2014.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair

The Chair commented on a number of issues of interest to members.

A member sought clarity surrounding the skills gap debate, an issue to which the Chair responded.

ACTION ITEMS

4. Proposed New Course Designation of CSD (Communication Sciences and Disorders)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Karen Pollock, Chair, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine

Purpose of the Proposal: To introduce a new course designation, CSD (Communication Sciences and Disorders), for courses offered by the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders in place of the current designation, SPA (Speech Pathology and Audiology). This change in designation is related to the change in the name of the Department from Speech Pathology and Audiology (SPA) to Communication Sciences and Disorders. The rationale for changing the Department's name from SPA to CSD included the impression that the former name was old-fashioned and did not adequately reflect the scope of work encompassed by the Department (eg, the name of the profession is "speech-language pathology," not "speech pathology;" the term "communication" covers a broader range of content including speech, language, hearing, voice, and fluency; coursework in the Department includes basic scientific processes underlying communication in addition to the assessment and treatment of disorders). The same reasoning applies to the course designation change from SPA to CSD. Furthermore, changing the course designation to match the new department name will reduce confusion and enhance communication among units on campus.

Discussion:

Dr Pollock provided members with a brief introduction of this proposal, noting that, in December of 2013, the name of the Department was changed and, thus, the existing course designator used by the unit now requires amendment. She noted that it would be confusing to offer a course with a designator that did not match the name of the Department.

A member sought clarification surrounding whether the nomenclature for the graduate-level degree programs offered by the Department had changed or would be changing. Dr Pollock responded that this would not occur.

Motion: van der Baan/Robertson

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, a new course designation of CSD (Communication Sciences and Disorders), as submitted by the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, to take effect for Fall Term, 2014.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5. Use of the Term “College” at the University of Alberta

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Carl Amrhein, Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair, GFC Executive Committee; Kathleen Brough, Portfolio Initiatives Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Purpose of the Proposal: To discuss the use of the term ‘college’ in the context of particular administrative units at the University of Alberta.

Discussion:

Dr Amrhein began by denoting differences between the University’s current wide-ranging use of the term ‘school’, which served to name a number of differing academic entities, from that of the term ‘college’, a term not currently in wide use at the institution. In this context, he noted that administrative units, to which it was anticipated the term ‘college’ would be applied in certain cases, are under the purview of the University’s Administration and, as such, do not fall under the mandate of the University’s academic governing body, General Faculties Council (GFC).

Mr Bodnar pointed out that there is mention of ‘schools’ in the Alberta *Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA)*, although it is narrowly defined in the *Act* and represents only one of the many ways in which the University has chosen to use this descriptor.

Dr Amrhein explained the benefits of discussing the use of the term ‘college’ at this time to better determine how it would be used by the University into the future.

During the discussion surrounding this item, members expressed a number of questions and comments, including, but not limited to: clarification surrounding the approval route of an established college at the University of Alberta; an expression of gratitude for this type of clarifying discussion; whether this would apply to a college of interdisciplinary studies; clarification surrounding the research conducted in drafting the supporting material for this discussion item; clarification on best practices regarding the establishment of and nomenclature associated with administrative units; that the proposed definition is accurate in that it contains facilitative connections; that it needs to be specified within the proposal who is ultimately responsible for the creation of this definition; clarification regarding the possibility of Faculties creating colleges at the institution; a suggestion to amend the proposal to clarify what a college is before stating what a college is not; clarification surrounding policies and processes associated with administrative units; clarification surrounding whether this would result in the creation of an institutional policy or procedure; further clarification surrounding the definitions of the terms “college,” “centre,” and “institute”; a suggestion to include the word “teaching” in the definition; clarification on how membership within a college would be

assessed/assigned/regulated; that members of the academy are interested in this issue and should be included in this type of discussion; that it is difficult to provide feedback on this proposal without knowing what its intended use will be; that, because of potentially large financial implications, the Board of Governors should be involved in the approval process of defining a 'college'; concerns that the process of creating a college may not include feedback from students or faculty members; and that the approval of a large project, such as the Loughheed Leadership College, on a piecemeal basis is problematic.

The discussion continued, with members making the following points: clarification surrounding whether there is a common understanding of the purposes of a college; whether there is a more contemporary usage of the word 'college' across North America in the post-secondary context and that there are already a large number of definitions that relate to activities associated with research and teaching; that 'college' is often used to define an organizational structure; that there are other uses of the word 'college' which provide broad usage and are not necessarily tied to teaching; that, at certain other post-secondary institutions, each student is expected to declare affiliation with a college; that there is value in defining what a college is not; clarification surrounding who would control a college and whether it could be under GFC's purview, even though it might be an administrative unit; that the GFC Standing Committees serve as forums for collaboration across the academy; that this discussion is not meant to be the final one on this topic; that there should be a formal vote on the creation of a college; that determining who has formal authority over the creation of a college is a crucial component; clarification surrounding feedback on this issue from Deans and other advisory bodies and about where the document will be presented in the future, in terms of governance committees; clarification about whether colleges will be used within the academy to provide students with a particular experience; whether there could be a term other than 'principal' utilised and a suggestion to replace the word 'principal' with 'master' or 'director'; and that certain titles contain negative connotations and, therefore, should not be used.

The Chair thanked members for their comments, noting he would take them under advisement.

6. Updates and Provision of Advice to the Provost

There were no documents.

Presenter: Carl Amrhein, Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair, GFC Executive Committee

6.1 Fall Term Reading Week – Follow-up

Discussion:

Dr Amrhein invited members to share what they may view as outstanding issues related to the recently-approved Fall Term Reading Week proposal.

Mr Kusmu reported that a broadly-based task force is being created to work on the programming that would be available to students during this reading week.

6.2 Advice on Next Steps on Attributes and Competencies

Discussion:

Dr Amrhein invited members to advise him on possible next steps in relation to institution-wide attributes and competencies.

Members provided a number of comments and questions in relation to this item, including, but not limited to: a suggestion to clarify, initially, any extra workload issues for staff associated with the formal introduction of attributes and competencies in academic programming; a suggestion to start focussing on

assisting graduate and undergraduate students with the articulation of the attributes and competencies they already possess; that the University of Alberta can use this opportunity to create something unique; that a considerable number of attributes and competencies are created by and through non-course based activities; clarification on how the institution would self-measure in regard to attributes and competencies; that other institutions place the burden of proof on students to demonstrate they are attaining success in achieving a range of competencies; that certain Faculties externally accredited already have a working list of attributes and competencies to which they must conform; that students at the institution are already obtaining attributes and competencies in a myriad of ways; an expression of concern with the possibility of courses being audited for attributes and competencies; that, if students solely seek the attainment of certain attributes and/or competencies, they might not get the full and wide-ranging benefits of a well-designed program; that the language surrounding these issues contributes to the difficulty in discussing attributes and competencies; that the Students' Union (SU) is appreciative of the attention this issue is receiving; that members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta have expressed interest in attributes and competencies; a suggestion to include a financial incentive for those offering programs to conform; that the list of attributes and competencies is both beneficial and limiting; whether the list-based approach is the best basis upon which to conduct this important conversation; that there should be an attempt to advertise the attributes that students at the University of Alberta are already achieving; and clarification on the political positioning of the University of Alberta in relation to this issue.

Dr Amrhein thanked members for their comments and stated it was important for the University of Alberta to take control of this discussion and establish its own framework in this regard, rather than having it imposed upon the institution by outside agencies.

6.3 Enrolment Management

Discussion:

Dr Amrhein explained that the issue of enrolment management has proven to be a complicated issue and that there have a number of 'spin-off' conversations resulting from the recent distribution of the newly-revised annual enrolment management report. He noted that, currently, the issue is being reviewed in depth by his Office and the Office of the Registrar.

Ms Collins reported that there is a need to refine practices in relation to enrolment management at the University of Alberta in three key areas, including: obtaining and maintaining better data to support decisions and evaluation; the development of in-cycle tools to regulate enrolment; and the development of certain other policy issues in relation to institutional admissions and transfer matters.

A member noted that undergraduate student members of GFC are excited about this project; and sought clarification regarding GFC's involvement in enrolment management decisions.

7. Question Period

Members enquired about the status of electronic Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (eUSRIs) at the University of Alberta and sought clarification about whether such usage will be mandated.

A member enquired about the status of the report emanating from the President's GFC Task Force.

INFORMATION REPORTS

8. Items Approved by the GFC Executive Committee by E-Mail Ballots

There were no items.

9. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

10. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:05 pm.