

General Faculties Council  
Executive Committee  
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, May 13, 2024  
South Academic Building (SAB) 2-31  
2:00 PM - 3:10 PM

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**ATTENDEES:**

Bill Flanagan, Chair  
Pedro Almeida  
Ryan Dunch  
Kyle Foster  
Sujata Persad  
Spencer Proctor  
Norma Rodenburg  
Dan Romanyk  
John Spence

Robert Wood  
Verna Yiu

**REGRETS:**  
Jelena Holovati (Vice Chair)  
Rija Kamran  
Julianne Gibbs

*non-voting:*  
John Lemieux  
Kate Peters  
*staff:*  
Carley Roth

**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, Chair of GFC Executive Committee (EXEC)

*Discussion:*

The motion to approve the agenda was moved and seconded

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the agenda.

**CARRIED**

2. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

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

*Discussion:* The Chair provided an update on the closure of the Encampment on May 11th and noted that this was an important start of a conversation in the University community. He pointed to the experience in universities across the country and in particular, the recent events at the University of Calgary. He spoke to the overriding concern for the safety of members of the University community and the desire to ensure that they were protected. He explained that students were peacefully protesting and expressed a concern that these students be protected and that he took personal responsibility to ensure the safety of students. He noted that in other camps, the situation had evolved rapidly and spoke to the limitations of resources to manage a situation if counter-protesters had arrived. He shared this had been the most difficult decision of his career and provided details that informed his choice, including that he had been informed by Edmonton Police Services (EPS) about the presence of individuals in the camp who were known to police. He assured members that the vast majority of participants left peacefully when asked by EPS and shared that there were a remainder of about a dozen individuals who had refused to leave. He emphasized that the actions of EPS were beyond the University's

control and expressed his gratitude for their work to safely disperse the crowd. He concluded by repeating the importance of the University's value of Freedom of Expression, the ability of students to peacefully protest and express their views, and the of debate and critique. He expressed to members that the content of the views was not the rationale for making the decision to dismantle the camps, rather the safety of members of the campus community, especially students, was central to the events of May 11 and 12, 2024. He expressed a willingness and an openness to discuss and hear feedback from members of Exec, as well as their advice and comments on how the University community can move forward.

Members expressed appreciation for the President's candor, and the communications to present. They encouraged the President to communicate widely with the level of detail provided to EXEC. They recognised the difficulty of the situation and expressed support for the level of communication. They noted the presence of the general public on the Campus citing the dance competitions with young children on the weekend of May 10th and that there is a public safety role that the University must consider. Members suggested that protocols or procedures for managing situations like these would be positive.

The President expressed appreciation for the faculty and staff who had supported the work over the weekend and who were continuing to work to support ongoing management of the situation. He noted that the University will continue to support peaceful protests but will not be allowing a new encampment to be established.

Members noted their support for the commitment to freedom of expression and that while an encampment may not be an appropriate mechanism for communicating views, it remains a foundational value and that transparency and communication are key. Members noted that within the communications, there was content that suggested that violence was likely to occur imminently and that there were ongoing questions about the credibility of the communications and the facts expressed within them.

Members noted the imbalance in the information available on social media and that there was a lack of information that shows protesters leaving peacefully and suggested that if this content was available, it should be shared. They noted that faculty members had also expressed in the media their experience and that these perspectives were in conflict with the communications from administration.

The President reiterated the difficulty of the decision and that he stood by his actions. He expressed his understanding that it will not be well-received by some members of the community and spoke to plans to communicate with students to ensure they had access to the supports they need. He thanked members for their constructive comments.

In addition, the Chair announced the winners of the University Teaching Awards and invited members to participate in a final roundtable concerning the Cameron History Mural Project. He then invited K Peters to speak to vacancies on GFC Standing Committees and J Lemieux to provide an update on the Presidential Review process.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of April 8, 2024
4. Changes to the Faculty of Nursing Faculty Council Composition
5. Changes to the Faculty of Science Faculty Council Composition

6. Changes to the Faculty of Business Faculty Council Composition

The motion to approve the consent agenda was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the consent agenda.

**CARRIED**

**ACTION ITEMS**

7. University Policy Development Oversight

*Presenter(s):* Brad Hamdon, University General Counsel; John Lemieux, University Secretary; Jay Jorgensen, Institutional Policy Lead;

*Discussion:* The Chair noted that this was coming back for action after discussion at EXEC and GFC in March and pointed to the requested Board-level policy definition on page 31 of the materials. He invited B Hamdon to present he reminded members about the objective behind policy revisions.

Members asked:

- How to interpret the language regarding “inherent jurisdiction to make and amend policies with respect to its own governance” and;
- How to understand the procedures circulated on the weekend regarding the University’s process for managing protesters and encampments, its provenance, and the approval body.

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC Executive Committee recommend that the Board of Governors approve the Policy Development Policy as set out in Attachment 1.

**CARRIED**

8. Bilingual Parchment for the Certificate in Francophone Practice for Speech-Language Pathologists

*Presenter(s):* Esther Kim, Associate Professor, Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine

*Discussion:* The Chair noted the delegated authority to approve changes to University parchments and its relation to authority held by GFC in the PSLA related to award degrees. E Kim noted the rationale for the proposal which will ensure that the parchment is bilingual.

There were no questions.

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve with delegated authority the change of the parchment for the Certificate in Francophone Practice for Speech-Language Pathologists from English to Bilingual.

**CARRIED**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

9. 2023-2024 Report from Exec GPO 2:30- 2:45 p.m.

*Presenter(s)*: Ryan Dunch, Chair, Executive Governance and Procedural Oversight Committee (EXEC GPO)

*Discussion*: The Chair began by thanking R Dunch for his leadership of the EXEC GPO over the past year and recognising the important work and success of the committee. R Dunch noted the remaining work to examine composition of both GFC and GFC Standing Committees given the discussions about balancing committee members and ensuring that the necessary expertise was available. He spoke to the approach taken by the committee which was to table these questions and tackle them in the coming year.

**ACTION ITEMS**

10. Draft Agenda for the Next Meeting of General Faculties Council

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

*Discussion*: Members asked:

- Whether the President was planning to provide remarks concerning the University's response to encampments under comments from the Chair and a suggestion to include more time on the agenda
- **The inclusion of the Space Management Policy Revisions on the GFC agenda and a question of whether the membership on the Space Management Committee would be included with materials;**
- A question about the People Strategy, and how much time should be allocated;
- A suggestion to include an distinct agenda item for questions related to the encampments preceding question period; and
- **Whether it was appropriate to include changes to Thesis Requirements on the consent agenda.**

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the Agenda for the May 27, 2024, meeting of General Faculties Council.

**CARRIED**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

11. Question Period

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

*Discussion*

**CLOSING SESSION**

12. Adjournment

- Next Meeting of Exec: June 17, 2024
- Next Meeting of GFC: May 27, 2024

