



General Faculties Council
Academic Planning Committee
Approved Open Session Minutes

Wednesday, April 14, 2021
Zoom Virtual Meeting
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Steven Dew, Chair
Joel Agarwal
Chris Andersen
Walter Dixon
Shannon Erichsen
Susanne Luhmann
Pirkko Markula

Melissa Padfield
Jerine Pegg
Susan Sommerfeldt
Kisha Supernant
Marc Waddingham
Ding Xu
non-voting:
Kate Peters

REGRETS:

Amlan Bose
Martin Coutts
Brad Hamdon
Jelena Holovati
Sheena Wilson
Yan Yuan

Staff:

Heather Richholt, Scribe

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)

Motion: Andersen/Luhmann

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:

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

- Covid-19 and planning for fall 2021:
 - vaccinations and expected public health measures;
 - the potential strategy for classes with multiple sections to have dedicated in person and online sections; and
 - international students and travel delays;
- proposals under development for exceptional tuition increases;
- Provost's Fellow Karsten Mündel's appointment to work with internal and external stakeholders in the development of an institutional approach to work-integrated and experiential learning activities;
- the announcement of the General Managers for the Colleges; and
- a thank you to the student members as this was the final APC meeting of their terms.

Members expressed opinions and comments about the exceptional tuition increase proposals, including but not limited to:

- whether the differential ability to raise tuition would affect budgets and the security of faculty positions in Departments and Faculties;
- concern that programs which are able to raise tuition would have unfair advantages over those which could not;
- concern with the lack of notice to student groups about these proposals and the short timelines for consultation;
- whether there would be implications to graduate funding packages in affected programs; and
- that comparisons with other U15 institutions were difficult to make because Alberta's Student Financial Aid was far below that of other provinces.

The Chair explained that the twelve programs developing proposals to seek exceptional tuition increases were professional programs that had been constrained by a tuition freeze for the past decade. He further explained that they are competing with peer institutions that had been able to provide far more resources for their students. He observed that these programs wanted to be able to provide competitive programming and resources to students and that tuition revenue would allow them to do that. He noted that, if approved, all the funds gained by tuition increases would be reinvested back into the programs. The Chair also noted that work on the proposals began when the province permitted the University to move forward and that the Minister would want to hear student feedback before making any decisions. Further, the Chair explained that after Ministry approval, any proposals moving forward would enter the normal pathways for internal consultation toward seeking APC recommendation and Board approval in spring 2022.

Members also discussed the use of vaccine passports at some American universities, the safety of COVID-19 vaccines, and Alberta's public health regulations.

CONSENT AGENDA

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Consent Agenda Mover and Seconder: Supernant/Xu

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes for March 17 and April 7, 2021

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve the open session minutes of March 17 and April 7, 2021.

CARRIED

4. Centres and Institutes Committee (CIC) Annual Report

Purpose of the Proposal: To provide the 2020 Centres and Institutes Committee (CIC) Annual Report to the GFC Academic Planning Committee (APC).

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5. Development of a GFC Position on Metrics Associated With Academic Restructuring

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 in response to a recommendation included in the report generated from the committee of the whole discussion at the GFC meeting on February 8, 2021.

Discussion:

The Chair gave an overview of the draft language around metrics for Financial, Quality of Shared Services, and Interdisciplinarity, developed from the conversations of APC's working group. He noted plans to update GFC and the Board, and expected timelines for APC and GFC to make recommendations.

Members asked questions and expressed comments including but not limited to:

- the importance of quality control, and meaningful, well developed questions for pulse surveys;
- whether the Nous Group would be involved in the surveys;
- the importance of establishing a baseline for surveys and taking lag times and participation rates into account;
- whether the proposed metrics would measure the effectiveness of the College Deans;
- who would compile the data and how it would be reported to GFC and the Board;
- key stakeholders for shared services pulse surveys and a suggestion to include an open response question;
- the importance of including the student voice in the metrics;
- a request for a clearer explanation of the proposed financial metric at the next APC or working group meeting;
- specifics of the surveys and how to look at feedback from various groups; and
- a request to make it clear to GFC that this was a draft and there was more work to be done.

The Chair explained that the Service Excellence Transformation (SET) team would send out specific pulse surveys as ongoing changes were launched and that APC working group members may be asked to weigh in. He answered that Nous Group would not be involved in the surveys and the SET team were all from the University of Alberta. He also noted that other quality control measures would be employed beyond the pulse surveys. The Chair noted that measurable outcomes regarding Academic Restructuring and SET were impossible to separate so the metrics would apply to the effectiveness of the whole system.

6. Online Programming Strategy

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee to seek input to inform the university's approach to supporting and enhancing online programming going forward, as a component of a broader strategy to support enrolment growth.

Discussion:

The Chair noted that this item was before the committee with a request for input on three questions:

1. How should the university approach ensuring an outstanding student experience in its online programming?
2. How can the university best support faculty and instructors in the context of online programming?
3. What are some high demand and high value potential programs that should receive priority consideration as online offerings?

Dr Rodgers noted that online programming was an opportunity to enhance and extend the university's brand and reach. She spoke about supporting access for under-served student groups to increase accessibility, leveraging the experience and knowledge gained from remote learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the consultation and proposed timelines for development of this strategy.

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

- Chairs' Council as an important stakeholder in the consultation and the importance of also learning from pre-pandemic online courses and programs;
- the example of the Department of Surgery's "Surgery 101" and the support staff infrastructure required for development and maintenance of the series;
- enlisting the involvement of those individuals on campus who were engaged in active research related to online learning;
- the engagement of specialists on accessibility and the issues of quality control;
- funding sources for development of online offerings;
- opportunities for development of interdisciplinary courses and programs;
- collaboration and competition with other universities; and
- the involvement of the Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives) and the Centre for Teaching and Learning.

EARLY CONSULTATION

7. Delegated Authority of the Undergraduate Awards and Bursaries Committee (UABC)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Kate Peters, GFC Secretary and Manager of GFC Services

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee because University Governance has reviewed the legislative authority of the task-based committees identified by the Adhoc Committee on Academic Governance Including Delegated Authority, including the Undergraduate Awards and Bursaries Committee (UABC). The analysis by University Governance found that the responsibilities and tasks identified in the Terms of Reference for the UABC exceed the authority of the General Faculties Council (GFC) over "rules and regulations respecting academic awards". They recommend that this authority be revisited and recommend moving the delegated authority to a different standing committee.

Discussion:

Ms Peters gave an overview of the review of the legislative authority and the advice from Governance regarding the authority related to Academic Awards.

There were no comments or questions.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

8. Quality Assurance (QA) Suite of Activities: 2019-2020 Excerpted QA Reports from the Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

Item was deferred.

EARLY CONSULTATION

9. Changes to Faculty of Extension (no documents)

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and Chair of APC; Maria Mayan, Interim Dean, Faculty of Extension

Discussion:

The Chair noted that this discussion was about the future of the Faculty of Extension and the university's vision for non-credit and continuing professional education. He observed that Extension was well situated to transform into an Academic Support Unit to both develop and deliver programs, and to support Faculties' work to develop

their own offerings. He noted that APC would be involved in any restructuring decisions moving forward and that the plan for Extension leadership had to be solid.

Dr Mayan observed that there needed to be a clear rationale for moving from a Faculty to a Unit and that it was important to determine what was best for the institution.

Members discussed the previous move of faculty positions and programs from the Faculty of Extension to other Faculties on campus, and the consultation and decision making process.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

10. Question Period

There were no questions.

11. Budget Update (no documents)

Item was deferred.

INFORMATION REPORTS

12. Items Approved by GFC Academic Planning Committee by email ballots

There were no items.

13. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

14. Adjournment

- Next Meeting of APC: May 5, 2021
- Next Meeting of GFC: April 26, 2021

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:05 p.m.