



General Faculties Council
Committee on the Learning Environment
Approved Open Session Minutes

Wednesday, September 06, 2017
2-31 South Academic Building (SAB)
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Sarah Forgie, Chair
Janice Causgrove Dunn
Kathleen DeLong
Robert Desjardins
Yuuki Ito
Firouz Khodayari
Eva Lemaire

Janice Miller-Young
Jeff Rawlings
Norma Rodenburg
Shane Scott
Andrews Tawiah
Jennifer Tupper
Mani Vaidyanathan
Stanley Varnhagen

REGRETS:

Janet Wesselius

STAFF:

Meg Brolley, GFC Secretary
Andrea Patrick, Scribe

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Causgrove Dunn/Scott

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of April 26, 2017

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Miller Young/Causgrove Dunn

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Minutes of April 26, 2017.

CARRIED

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of June 7, 2017

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Causgrove Dunn/Rawlings

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Minutes of June 7, 2017.

CARRIED

4. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

The Chair noted that a number of locations across campus have been identified that may be used by First Nation, Metis and Inuit peoples to honour and practice their traditions and ceremonies without impact to sensitive building safety systems. Details on how to book these spaces and the process to have other areas

checked for suitability can be found at: www.ualberta.ca/vice-president-facilities-operations/service-catalogue/events/ceremony-at-ualberta

The Chair reported that a Selection Committee for the Vice Provost and Chief Librarian was being struck; the composition of the committee includes the Chair of CLE or designate. Members were asked to contact the Chair if they were interested in this opportunity. It was noted that the committee composition also includes three academic staff members elected by General Faculties Council, that nomination process would begin shortly.

5. Committee Kick-Off and Orientation 2017-2018

Presenter(s): Marion Haggarty-France, University Secretary; Meg Brolley, GFC Secretary

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Ms Haggarty-France and Ms Brolley provided members with a high level overview of the university's governance structure. Members were provided with an orientation to GFC's approved principles of delegated authority and committee composition, and the significance of these documents to the structure and functioning of CLE. In addition, the roles and responsibilities of members and procedural rules were reviewed. Finally, the mandate and responsibilities of CLE were discussed and the recommendation of the ad hoc committee to revise the terms of reference of the committee was introduced. A question arose about the status of the writing committee; the Chair noted that consultations had occurred and a report completed.

ACTION ITEMS

6. Election of a Vice-Chair

This item was deferred.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

7. Proposed Changes to the Evaluation Procedures and Grading System Section in the University Calendar with respect to the Course Syllabus

Presenter(s): Norma Rodenburg, Assistant Registrar

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Ms Rodenburg provided an overview of the materials in front of members noting that the proposed changes to course outlines arise from discussions by the working group on the student equity statement in 2016 and a question at GFC about how students are informed of emergency procedures. She noted that the proposal included a separation of required and optional items for the course outline. A member raised concerns about the proposed addition of learning outcomes to course outlines.

Members discussed learning outcomes and provided comments on academic freedom, resources for faculty to develop statements of learning outcomes and ways to plan how the course fits in with their long term program outcomes. Further discussion on learning outcomes involved how they could be used to inform students and be useful in course re-design and program level planning. A member reported that the Moodle syllabus and mapping tool had been implemented in their Faculty and noted that supports were put in place to assist faculty by converting current course outlines to the new system and that this helped with the uptake.

Members also discussed tentative course schedules and expressed concerns over the loss of flexibility to adapt course schedules, while others expressed concerns around allowing students a timeline to plan in terms of mental health.

With respect to the course outline, it was suggested that the list of student supports be expanded to include details of the Dean of Students and those offered by the students' union.

8. Revisions to the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment Terms of Reference – Next Steps (no documents)

Presenter(s): Sarah Forgie

The Chair noted that the draft terms of reference added two members to the committee: a representative from Facilities and Operations and another representative from the Libraries. She further noted that there was considerable work that needed to occur on the terms of reference and suggested that a working group be formed; an email will be sent to members to solicit interest in serving on the working group

9. Updates (standing item)

A. Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

Presenter(s): Janice Miller-Young, Director, CTL

Dr Miller-Young provided the following update:

- Learning Outcomes have been presented at Faculty and Chair retreats and were well received
- Regular summer courses were in course design and orientation for new professors and those new to teaching.
- For the fall, CTL is organizing workshops that can be offered as standalone or taken as a series; topics include Indigenizing the curriculum and educational technology.
- Survey of teaching practices will occur in October; this will inform future programming.
- There will be a blended learning showcase in November.
- Open Educational Resources (OER) continues to be an initiative of Campus Alberta.

B. Information Technology (IT)

Presenter(s): Jeff Rawlings, Director, Information Services and Technology

Mr Rawlings provided the following update:

- Strategic initiative to define learning technologies ecosystem, a learning technology advisory committee is being established will look at how best to introduce new applications to the university.
- Online testing, including final examinations, is becoming more prevalent.
- Identifying what is needed and how to utilize existing lab spaces which are getting tight.
- A secure online mobile applications will be piloted in January in Education.
- Classroom technology evergreening continues; challenges with Canadian dollar and the move from analogue to digital.

C. Learning Services

Presenter(s): Kathleen DeLong, Interim Vice-Provost and Chief Librarian

Ms DeLong noted that while Libraries is the biggest unit within Learning Services portfolio, it also includes the University of Alberta Press, Museums, the Bookstore, the Copyright Office and the Technology Training Centre. She added that Libraries is considered primarily in its research function, and shared with the committee a concept paper about how the Libraries can also function as a teaching library (attached). Some of the current teaching activities include: teaching students, professional development for the community, and the Indigenous Internship Program.

D. General Faculties Council (GFC)

Presenter(s): Sarah Forgie, Chair, CLE

Dr Forgie informed the committee that the CLE report would be considered by GFC on September 25 and invited interested members to attend that meeting.

10. Question Period

There were no questions.

INFORMATION REPORTS

11. Items Approved by the Committee by E-Mail Ballots (non-debatable)

There were no items.

12. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

13. The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM