



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

Wednesday, October 27, 2021
 Zoom Virtual Meeting
 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

John Nychka, Chair
 Benjamin Cheung
 Kathy Haddadkar
 Christine Hughes
 Hollis Lai
 Pierre Lemelin
 Angie Mandeville
 Al Meldrum
 Abner Moneiro
 Mary Olukotun

Norma Rodenburg
 Ali Shiri
 Gregory Thomas
 Shauna Wilton
 Connie Winther

non-voting:
 Ben Louie (Delegate)
 Mike MacGregor
 Tommy Mayberry
 Kate Peters

REGRETS:

Ashmeen Aneja
 Angela Bayduza
 Brad Hamdon
 Bora Kim
 Lara McClelland

Staff:

Heather Richholt, Coordinator
 Edyta McLoughlin, Scribe

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): John Nychka, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives), Chair GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)

Discussion:

Before opening the meeting, the Chair made the following territorial acknowledgment:

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.

The Chair noted that Ben Louie was attending the meeting as a delegate for Lara McClelland and would provide the Facilities and Operations update.

Motion: MacGregor/Hughes

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

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of September 29, 2021

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): John Nychka, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives), Chair CLE

Motion: Lemelin/Shiri

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the open session minutes of September 29, 2021.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

Presenter(s): John Nychka, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives), Chair CLE

Discussion:

The Chair noted that the Vice-Chair role was still open and encouraged anyone interested to reach out to him or to the Committee Coordinator.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. Updates

A. Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

Presenter(s): Tommy Mayberry, Executive Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

Discussion:

T Mayberry made note of the following:

- A new Lead Education Developer, Assessment and Evaluation position would be announced soon;
- CTL was reviewing other job descriptions including one lead position focused on the Indigenous Portfolio and one on the Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Portfolio; and
- The Steering Committee for the Festival of Teaching and Learning was updating its terms of reference in order to begin in a good way.

B. Facilities and Operations

Presenter(s): Ben Louie, University Architect

Discussion:

Mr Louie provided an update in support of one of the three key initiatives set out in Service Excellence Transformation (SET): space and facilities. He reported that the Department of Integrated Planning & Partnership of Facilities and Operations, led by Lara McClellan had undertaken a number of initiatives, which included:

- The development of a Draft Space Optimization Strategy document by the Facility Optimization Oversight Committee. To meet the targeted timeline, the Space Optimization document would be finalized by December 2021; and
- The scope and funding requirements to establish a common platform for meeting rooms and classrooms through a booking platform. Lara McClellan, Melissa Padfield, and Mike MacGregor are working on a working group and piloting use at Enterprise Square.

C. Information Technology

Presenter(s): Mike MacGregor, Associate Vice-President and Chief Information Officer

Discussion:

Dr MacGregor explained that IST was working on a new enterprise video platform called YuJa with a broad array of capabilities to securely create, manage, livestream and collaborate on video content. The software is integrated with eClass and is currently being piloted with planned implementation for the winter term. Dr MacGregor noted that development of more hybrid classrooms is planned in addition to the 65-70 hybrid classrooms developed over

the summer. He also provided an update on the Learning Assessment Centre (LAC) and on the migration of centrally booked classrooms.

D. Library and Museums

Presenter(s): Connie Winther, Head, Faculty Engagement (Health Sciences), Library and Museums

Discussion:

Ms Winther spoke about her work chairing the Teaching and Learning Strategy Working Group who are looking to propose collaborative and sustainable teaching strategies for University Libraries. She also updated CLE that as of November 1 2021, the Library service points would be checking for Campus Ready as well as Alberta proof of vaccinations for campus visitors.

E. General Faculties Council

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

Discussion:

Ms Peters highlighted the following items from recent meeting of GFC:

- The changes to the GFC Guiding Documents including the Meeting Procedural Rules which was amended into a discussion item and would be returning to GFC for further discussion;
- The draft Institutional Indigenous Strategic Plan which would also be coming to CLE at the December meeting; and
- The new equity survey to be distributed to students.

She also notified members that the next GFC meeting would be taking place on November 29, 2021.

5. Assessments and Facilities for Online Exams (no documents)

Presenter(s): Mike MacGregor, Associate Vice-President and Chief Information Officer; Helen Vallianatos, Associate Dean of Students

Discussion:

Dr MacGregor and Dr Vallianatos spoke about the use of the Learning Assessment Centre (LAC) for online exams and a potential expansion to support student accommodations. Dr Vallianatos shared that LAC, which had been used in the past for exam proctoring, did not have enough space to meet current demand. She explained that for this academic year, additional classrooms have been identified and are being furnished for accommodating exams. She noted that space for exams going forward would continue to be an issue. She shared that she is working with a small team on online modules on Academic Integrity and Citizenship to be made available for students on eClass for fall of 2022.

The committee asked questions and expressed feedback, including but not limited to:

- That there are about 50 seats in the Learning Assessment Centre for student exams;
- advantages to changing the modes of assessment;
- technology issues versus design issues;
- How requests for use of the Centre are received; and
- How academic integrity conversations may have changed as changes to assessment accommodations are implemented.

6. Experiential and Work-Integrated Learning

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Karsten Mündel, Provost Fellow, Experiential and Work-Integrated Learning

Discussion:

Dr Mündel provided the committee with an overview of his work to support experiential and work-integrated learning (WIL) at the University. He reminded members that in 2020 the Ministry of Advanced Education introduced a performance-based funding metric related to WIL. He noted that by the 2023-24 academic year 100% of our students must have access to a WIL opportunity as part of their studies.

Dr Mündel presented definitions and examples including a visualization of clusters of experiential learning, and possible classifications of experiential learning and WIL. He then presented a pedagogical framework where two fundamental aspects are implementing cycles of action and reflection.

Members had questions and gave feedback including:

- how the University of Alberta was defining access to WIL;
- if entrepreneurial aspects could be explored;
- whether there could be an addition to the “other” classification type;
- timelines and scope; and
- how to balance independent critical thinkers and teamwork.

7. Exploration Credits

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Norma Rodenburg, Deputy Registrar; Abner Monteiro, Vice-President (Academic), Students' Union

Discussion:

Ms Rodenburg and Mr Monteiro presented a proposal for the university to allow students to request that certain elective courses be approved as exploration credits. They explained that when a course would be approved as an exploration credit the letter grade would be converted into a credit (CR) or no-credit (NC) grade on the student's transcript and would have no bearing on the student's grade point average (GPA) calculation. The presenters went over some of the requirements and restrictions of the proposed policy and noted the ways in which it could facilitate opportunities for interdisciplinary study.

The committee asked questions and expressed feedback, including but not limited to:

- how to mitigate instructor bias against students who chose this option;
- that the instructor would not know which students had declared the course as exploratory;
- the deadline to withdraw from a course or to change it to an exploration credit;
- whether programs with fewer open electives could participate;
- the opportunity for students to take courses outside their comfort zone;
- courses that were electives but could be required for admission to professional or graduate programs;
- the importance of communication to students that they check with their programs prior to declaring a course as exploratory;
- communications and clarity around regulations and potential negative impacts; and
- that the instructor would submit a letter grade and an F would be NC and a D or higher would be CR.

8. Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): John Nychka, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives), Chair CLE

Discussion:

The Chair shared that members would be randomly assigned to breakout rooms; each room would be assigned a specific set of draft Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) questions within a google document as well as a

background document. Members were asked to make comments directly within the google document and were informed that the google document would be accessible until Friday, November 12, 2021.

9. Question Period

There were no questions.

CLOSING SESSION

11. Adjournment

- Next meeting of CLE: December 1, 2021
- Next meeting of GFC: November 29, 2021

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