

General Faculties Council
Executive Committee (EXEC)
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, April 03, 2023
South Academic Building (SAB) 2-31
2:00 PM - 3:45 PM

ATTENDEES:

Bill Flanagan, Chair
Jerine Pegg
Bishoi Aziz
Jelena Holovati
Shanthi Johnson
Gurleen Kaur
Christopher Lupke

Spencer Proctor
Tracy Raivio
Norma Rodenburg
Dan Romanyk
Chanpreet Singh
Verna Yiu
Nese Yuksel

non-voting:
Brad Hamdon
Kate Peters

Staff:
Heather Richholt, Scribe

OPENING SESSION

Before calling the meeting to order, the Chair acknowledged the territory.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

Discussion:

GFC Secretary K Peters noted that the agenda format had been revised to add the items considered for the preparation of the GFC agenda as attachments under the approval of the agenda item. She pointed out that there was a discussion item placed in the middle of the action items so that EXEC could discuss the relevant work of their subcommittee on Governance and Procedural Oversight (GPO) before considering the motion on GFC composition. K Peters also suggested that the proposed revisions to the UAPPOL Teaching Awards Policy suite be discussed before placing the item on the GFC agenda.

The Chair suggested that the Policy suite item be considered as a new discussion item 9 after the action items.

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT GFC Executive Committee approve the agenda as amended.

CARRIED

2. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

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

Discussion:

The Chair noted that he would defer his comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of March 13 and March 22, 2023

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT GFC Executive Committee approve the open session minutes of March 13 and March 22, 2023.

CARRIED

ACTION ITEMS

4. Proposed Revisions to the GFC Executive Committee Terms of Reference and Proposed Deletion of the GFC Policy Manual Section 25

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Jerine Pegg, Professor and Chair of GFC Executive Subcommittee on Governance and Procedural Oversight (GPO); Kate Peters, GFC Secretary and Manager of GFC Services

Discussion:

The Chair thanked the members of GPO and noted that while GFC did not discuss this item due to lack of time at GFC meetings, members were asked to provide feedback on two different occasions.

J Pegg provided an overview of GPO's discussions, consultation with the Office of the Registrar and the Appeals and Compliance Coordinator, and GFC's feedback. She noted that there was not a lot of feedback from GFC but that one member did ask about having a dedicated Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA) member on the committee. She explained that GPO feels that it is better to allow for an appointed elected member from any staff category who could be one of the NASA members. She noted changes proposed to provide clarification of authority and mandate, alignment with the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (PSLA), and changes related to Section 25 of the GFC Policy Manual.

There was no discussion

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC Executive Committee recommend that General Faculties Council approve the proposed revisions to the GFC Executive Committee Terms of Reference as set forth in attachment 1, and the rescission of GFC Policy 25, to take effect upon approval.

CARRIED

5. Proposed Revisions to the UTAC Terms of Reference

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Jerine Pegg, Professor and Chair of GPO; Kate Peters, GFC Secretary and Manager of GFC Services

Discussion:

The Chair noted that EXEC had been informed of the work to get back to rewarding teaching with improved equity in the process. He thanked EXEC member Tracy Raivio for Chairing the GFC University Teaching Awards Committee (UTAC) and supporting that work.

J Pegg noted that GPO discussed the proposed changes and while they recognize that this is moving quickly, they are supportive. She pointed to the proposed changes and K Peters noted that due to changes at the last meeting of UTAC, a name change for the committee would not be necessary. T Raivio suggested an amendment under composition to ensure that either the chair or the vice-chair of the committee was a GFC member.

Members discussed:

- adding employee categories for ATS and faculty representatives;
- how to ensure diversity of representation; and
- adding language that additional staff members can be selected to ensure diversity of representation.

The committee agreed on some changes to the wording around membership, discussed the strategic and practical perspectives added by the ex officio members, and confirmed that appointed ex officio members can name delegates to the committee.

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC Executive Committee recommend that the General Faculties Council approve the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference for the GFC University Teaching Awards Committee as set forth in attachment 1, as amended, to take effect upon approval.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

6. Proposed Changes to GFC Terms of Reference and Reapportionment Procedure

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Jerine Pegg, Professor and Chair of GPO; Kate Peters, GFC Secretary and Manager of GFC Services

Discussion:

J Pegg explained that GPO will continue their work on the GFC composition but has finished reviewing and recommends that Exec take forward the other changes to the terms of reference and the revised Apportionment Procedure. She asked if EXEC would be willing to send these changes forward without composition.

A member asked about the extent of consultation on composition undertaken to date. J Pegg went over GPO's discussions, the information compiled and considered, and the meetings and feedback gathered outside of committees.

ACTION ITEMS

7. Proposed Change to GFC Meeting Procedural Rules

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Carolyn Sale, Associate Professor and Elected Academic Staff Member of GFC

Discussion:

The Chair noted that this item came out of a notice of motion that was made at the November 14, 2022 meeting of GFC. He explained that EXEC had two responsibilities, to consider whether they would recommend approval of the motion, and to place it on the GFC agenda as per section 8.7 of the GFC Meeting Procedural Rules.

C Sale expressed that the previous Meeting Procedural Rules included a requirement of thirty minutes for Question Period and that she understood that would always be the case.

General Counsel and University Secretary Brad Hamdon spoke about the ad hoc Governance and Procedural Review Committee that he co-chaired and that was tasked with a review of the GFC Guiding Documents including the Meeting Procedural Rules. He noted that the committee's recommendation was to remove the thirty minute requirement for Question Period. He also pointed out that EXEC's practice has become to place Question Period at the beginning of the discussion items.

During the discussion members considered:

- The importance of question period as a forum for members of the university to ask questions of senior leaders;
- EXEC's challenges in preparing the GFC agenda to ensure enough time for discussion and deliberation and that the committee needed flexibility to schedule a shorter question period when required;
- That the ad hoc committee B Hamdon co-chaired was made up of GFC members and that the committee had consulted with GFC on the proposed changes before the GFC approval in March 2022; and
- That GFC could and sometimes did extend their meetings but extending meetings was not equitable and should be avoided.

After the vote the Chair asked if members would speak to the reason for the decision at GFC. The committee agreed that the GFC Secretary should provide the context of the discussion in the GFC meeting materials in the form of a supplementary note.

The motion was moved and seconded

It is moved that rule 6.5 of GFC's "Meeting Procedural Rules" be revised as follows: 6.5 Each agenda of GFC will include a Question Period scheduled for one half-hour in length.

- Question period is comprised of both written questions and, time permitting, questions from the floor.
- The Chair will rule on whether a question from the floor can be answered expeditiously; if not, it will be referred to the appropriate officer for response at the next meeting.
- No debate is to be permitted of either the question or the response. Members who have submitted questions will be permitted to ask one or more supplementary questions, after which other members of GFC will have the same opportunity.

DEFEATED

8. Proposed Changes to GFC Composition

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Carolyn Sale, Associate Professor and Elected Academic Staff Member of GFC

Discussion:

The Chair introduced the item and explained that, as with item 7, EXEC's responsibility was to consider whether they would recommend approval of the motion, and to place it on the GFC agenda.

C Sale expressed that her motion was asking GFC to overturn a decision that it made in 1971. She noted that in order for the composition of GFC to be consistent with the core principles of collegial governance, the academic staff must have the responsibility of academic governance and a majority of the voting seats on GFC. She observed that the University of Alberta has the smallest percentage of academic staff in the U15 and across world-leading institutions. She noted that there should not be a reduction of student membership and that this

change would be a benefit to students because it would create a far more robust governance forum for them to participate in. C Sale further argued that If GFC were functioning properly it would not be possible for the Board to take actions on academic matters without GFC having ample time to consider them and make recommendations. She noted that GFC is only given the opportunity to have very brief input on important matters and this decision is a first step to ensure that GFC can function as a senior academic body.

During the discussion members considered:

- The opposition of student members of EXEC and the letters of support submitted for their consideration by the UA Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Association;
- That the 1971 decision stated that no one constituent group should be able to carry a vote without substantial number of votes from another group;
- That the parity of students and elected academic staff was a unique and time tested feature of the University of Alberta governance system and a strength of the University;
- That only the three statutory student members of GFC could vote on this motion;
- That this motion would tokenize the student voice at GFC;
- Differing opinions on the size of GFC and whether the number of ex officio members on GFC was too large;
- The "statutory" members that were required by the Post-Secondary Learning Act; and
- The considerable work of GPO who is currently reviewing the GFC terms of reference and have not determined a clear path forward regarding composition.

After the vote the committee agreed, as with the previous item, that the GFC Secretary should provide the context of the discussion in the GFC meeting materials in the form of comments from the committee and note the unanimity of the decision at EXEC.

The motion was moved and seconded.

That full-time academic staff shall constitute at least 51% of the membership of the General Faculties Council.

That to accomplish this for the immediate future, GFC shall appoint an additional thirty-eight (38) members of academic staff in full-time positions to the General Faculties Council for three- year terms starting 1 July 2023.

That the procedure for these appointments shall be as follows:

- There shall be an open call to full-time members of the academic staff to stand for appointment to GFC under section 25 of the Post-secondary Learning Act.
- If more than thirty-eight members of the full-time academic staff agree to stand for appointment to GFC, those standing for appointment shall be elected by the members of the academic staff, with the names of the thirty-eight members receiving the highest number of votes being put forward to GFC for appointment to GFC.

That future appointments of academic staff under section 25 of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* to maintain a composition of GFC in which academic staff constitute at least 51% of GFC shall be made by the same procedure.

UNANIMOUSLY DEFEATED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

9. UAPPOL Policy and Procedure

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Tracy Raivio Professor and Chair of UTAC; Karsten Mundel, Acting Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives)

Discussion:

T Raivio noted that UTAC has met three times and has done work to revise the policy suite so that the university can move forward with recognition of teaching awards. She noted that the committee was not quite ready to recommend the revised documents but that they had one more meeting later that week to finish up their work. She pointed to the latest draft in the package and went over the changes that have been made to the policy and the new procedure that has been developed, all in response to the recommendations in the report of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Review of Teaching Awards Working Group. She highlighted that the Committee had carefully thought through the language in the documents and considered how we define excellence in teaching.

K Mündel noted that if the university was to have teaching awards ready for the celebration event in November, everything would have to be approved in time for applications to be received before the end of August.

T Raivio suggested that the Policy suite come to GFC for approval on April 17 and asked if EXEC would consider approving the addition of the item to the GFC Agenda either subject to UTAC's approval or by eVote. They agreed to approve the agenda by eVote once UTAC had recommended approval of the policy suite.

Members discussed the changes to the Policy and the goal to recognize excellence but remove the inequitable and problematic connotations of the word, "excellence".

ACTION ITEMS

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

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

Discussion:

GFC Secretary K Peters pointed to the items on the consent agenda and asked EXEC members to be sure that they were appropriate. She committed to circulating the agenda for e-vote approval as soon as UTAC recommended the changes to the Teaching Awards Policy suite.

PREPARATION OF THE GFC AGENDA

A. Office of the Registrar: Degree Program Regulations, Calendar Effective Date

B. FSJ Proposal: Maîtrise en sciences

C. FSJ Proposal: Doctorat Etudes Transdisciplinaires

D. University Strategic Plan (documents to be distributed for GFC)

DISCUSSION ITEMS

11. Question Period

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

Discussion:

A member asked whether elected students and other appointed members of GFC would be able to participate in debate on the GFC composition. The Chair answered that appointed members would not be able to vote or propose amendments to the motion but would be able to participate in debate and discussion.

INFORMATION REPORTS

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

12. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings
- ACTION REQUIRED: Special Meeting of GFC Executive Committee - RSVP

CLOSING SESSION

13. Adjournment
- Next Meeting of Exec: May 15, 2023
- Next Meeting of GFC: April 17, 2023