

General Faculties Council
University Teaching Awards Committee (UTAC)
Approved Open Session Minutes

Thursday, April 6, 2023
South Academic Building (SAB) 3-07
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Tracy Raivio, Chair
Trish Manns, Vice-Chair
Ali Assi
Benjamin Cheung
Victoria Ruetalo

Janet Wesselius
Nakita Valerio
Minn N Yoon
guest:
Carrie Smith
non-voting:
Kate Peters

REGRETS:

Brad Hamdon
Brooklyn Mackown
Sabrina Jannat Shanta

Staff:

Heather Richholt, Coordinator

OPENING SESSION

Before calling the meeting to order, the Chair acknowledged the territory and observed that she had lived on Treaty 6, 7, and 8 most of her life. She spoke of her gratitude for the land and her evolving awareness about the relationships with First Peoples and the treaties.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Tracy Raivio, Professor and Chair of UTAC

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC University Teaching Awards Committee approve the agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Tracy Raivio, Professor and Chair of UTAC

Discussion: The Chair noted that the minutes were an important record of the careful conversation that members had on the draft policy suite.

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC University Teaching Awards Committee approve the March 30, 2023 minutes.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair

Presenter(s): Tracy Raivio, Professor and Chair of UTAC

The Chair thanked members for their engagement and recognized the transformative nature of these proposals with respect to the way the University recognizes teaching. She noted some of the discussion points at GFC Executive Committee with respect to the Policy Suite and Terms of Reference for UTAC including the inequitable and problematic connotations of the word, "excellence".

ACTION ITEMS

4. Proposed Revisions to the Awards for Teaching Excellence Policy Suite

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Karsten Mündel, Acting Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives)

Discussion:

K Mündel asked members to consider the draft policy and procedure and foreshadowed the work to put them into practice for launching some of the awards.

Members discussed:

- How to operationalise the procedure in the form of criteria for adjudication in an equity focused way;
- How the procedure sets out a framework for implementing the work of nominating and adjudicating awards;
- Whether there would be a completely new set of adjudication guidelines and the way that excellence might be defined in that work;
- A question as to whether "equity-denied" should be defined;
- The use of the term non-white and whether "racialised" was not chosen for specific reasons;
- The purpose statement and whether the Policy is limited to inclusive excellence and if the emphasis on teaching is lost;
- How the content could be tweaked to ensure it was clear that teaching was the focus and that inclusive excellence was a lens that was prioritized;
- That foregrounding teaching may be best achieved by moving some of the emphasis to teaching frameworks;
- That by intending to be inclusive, the language could exclude and to avoid this, changes were proposed to emphasize the intention of recognising teaching excellence for all members of the institution;
- The importance of listing racialized groups and religious minorities in the list of equity-denied groups;
- A question as to why we were listing the guiding principles from *Braiding Past, Present and Future, the Indigenous Strategic Plan* and whether we could simplify the list of guiding principles;
- How to recognise the concepts of "in-powered" and "empowered" in the criteria for them to be operationalised or implemented in the work of the committee;
- That "in-powered" is not defined in this document and that we need to anticipate the reader will be thrown by the use of the term;
- That the language could be simplified to ensure it is accessible to all in the university community and that we need to work to minimize the use of academic jargon to avoid creating a new kind of barrier;
- Whether this could be simplified by referring to positionality and the need for the framework to take into account the an individual's social location;
- Whether the concept of positionality could be integrated into adjudication guidelines rather than inscribed into the policy;
- That requirements for the definition of identity if they are not verified can lead to false recognition with the example given of recent "Pretendians" in the academy;
- That definitions or terms are limited to concepts of equity, diversity, and inclusion and Indigenous initiatives and that there are no guiding principles or terminology on teaching, the learning environment, or pedagogy;

- That how these principles and terminologies would be used in the teaching and learning environment is unclear;
- That referring to *Braiding* may be enough without recreating the list of principles;
- That inclusion is a term that is important to the policy and needs to be defined;
- That excellence on its own is not an issue, as long as it is contextualized in ways that recognise potential barriers;
- How best to recognise the important links between institutional strategic plans and this policy suite;
- Edits to the procedure to clarify the focus on inclusive excellence in teaching;
- Changes to ensure the student voice was captured in adjudication guidelines;
- Details on how documentation should be diverse and multifaceted; and
- A reference to the Framework for Effective Teaching.

At this point, noting the time, the Chair suggested they discuss next steps. K Peters explained that the GFC Executive Committee was waiting on the outcome of UTAC's meeting to place the Policy Suite on the April 17, 2023 GFC agenda for approval and that she was planning to distribute an e-vote to them. She suggested that there would need to be information provided to Executive Committee to inform their decision about whether the item was ready to move forward to GFC.

H Richholt noted that the committee no longer had quorum but that the GFC Meeting Procedural Rules allowed the committee to continue a meeting without quorum unless quorum is challenged by a voting member. She noted that this would be noted in the minutes and any decisions taken must be ratified at the next meeting. K Peters committed to distribute the documents to members to ensure that they could signal if they have any issues. The Chair asked that members be asked to ratify the vote by email to ensure they were in agreement.

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC University Teaching Awards Committee recommend that the General Faculties Council approve the revisions to the Awards for Teaching Excellence Policy including the name change to the Recognition of Teaching Policy as set forth in attachment 1.

CARRIED
(4 voting members present)

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC University Teaching Awards Committee recommend that General Faculties Council approve the new Teaching Awards Procedure as set forth in attachment 2, and the rescission of:

- Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching Procedure;
- Graduate Student Teaching Award Procedure;
- Provost's Award for Early Achievement of Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Procedure;
- Rutherford Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Procedure;
- Teaching Unit Award Procedure; and
- William Hardy Alexander Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Procedure.

CARRIED
(4 voting members present)

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5. Adjudication Guidelines

Item was deferred.

CLOSING SESSION

6. Adjournment

- Next meeting of UTAC: TBD
- Next meeting of GFC: April 17, 2023