



1. Mandate and Role of the Committee

The University of Alberta is governed bicamerally by the Board of Governors and General Faculties Council (GFC); they share and balance power within the University and are called upon to provide both oversight and strategic vision. The proper functioning of the Board and GFC are essential to the university's institutional autonomy and the processes of collegial academic governance.

GFC is the University's senior academic governing body defined in the *Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA)* and is responsible for the **academic affairs** of the University, subject to the authority of the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors has primary responsibility for the business affairs of the institution.

2. Areas of Responsibility

General Faculties Council (GFC) operates by authority of the Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA). The PSLA allows GFC to delegate its responsibilities to GFC standing committees and other persons.

GFC has delegated authority on many matters to GFC standing committees, faculty councils, officials of the University, and other bodies (see Section 6), thus allowing it to focus on high level strategic items of academic significance which include, but are not limited to:

- high level strategic and academic stewardship policy issues or matters of significant academic consequence to the University;
- alterations to the mandate, terms of reference, composition, or structure of a Standing Committee;
- those things which a Standing Committee considers to be of major strategic significance to or long-term impact on the University;
- those matters on which, in the opinion of a Standing Committee chair, there has been a strong division of opinion within the Standing Committee; and
- issues in which there is a lack of clarity as to which Standing Committee is responsible.

3. Composition

Voting Members (162)

Statutory:

Ex-officio (27) – PSLA, Sec 23(a)

- President, Chair
- Vice-Presidents (6)
- Dean of each Faculty (18)
- Vice-Provost and Chief Librarian
- Vice-Provost and University Registrar

Statutory Student Members (3) – PSLA, Sec 23(c)

- 2 students nominated by the Students' Union
- 1 student nominated by the Graduate Students' Association

Elected members (54) – PSLA, Sec 23(b)

- full-time academic staff (A1.1 and A1.6) elected by Faculty/School Council in the numbers assigned by GFC



Appointed -- PSLA, Sec 23 (d):

Elected Students

- undergraduate students (40)
- graduate students (14)

Other appointees (24)

- Vice-Provost and Dean of Students, or delegate
- President of AASUA
- President of St. Joseph's College, or delegate
- Principal of St. Stephen's College, or delegate
- 1 representative from Chairs' Council
- Board of Governors Representatives (6)
 - 1 academic staff member, nominated to the Board by GFC
 - 1 academic staff member, nominated to the Board by AASUA
 - 2 undergraduate students, nominated to the Board by the Students' Union
 - 1 graduate student, nominated to the Board by the Graduate Students' Association
 - 1 non-academic staff, nominated to the Board by NASA
- 2 non-academic staff; elected by NASA, up to 1 may be from excluded category
- 1 APO/FSO Representative, elected by AASUA
- 2 Academic Teaching Staff (ATS), elected by AASUA
- 3 library academic staff elected by the academic staff of the University Library
- 1 Postdoctoral Fellow, elected by the Postdoctoral Fellows Association
- 1 elected Management and Professional Staff (MAPS) representative, election conducted by University Governance
- 3 College Deans

Reapportionment of elected faculty and student seats takes place every three years with at least one faculty and one student per Faculty.

Each Faculty shall adopt a method of election for their respective elected faculty representatives to GFC. Academic staff members serve three year terms, elected individuals may serve more than one term. Faculties may elect members to serve one- or two-year terms in order to provide overlapping terms. Persons on leave normally do not serve.

Elected students are elected in accordance with the principles approved by GFC February 3, 1971. Student members serve a one year term, elected individuals may serve more than one term.

The President will chair GFC. In the absence of the President, GFC will be chaired by the Provost or by the Dean serving on the GFC Executive Committee.

Non-voting Members

- University Secretary
- GFC Secretary

4. Delegated Authority from the Board of Governors

Should be reviewed at least every three years and reported to GFC and the Board.

- 4.1 Physical Testing and Immunization of Students - individual Faculty regulations (sub-delegated to GFC Academic Standards Committee)



4.2 General Space Programs for academic units (sub-delegated to GFC Facilities Development Committee)

4.3 Proposals concerning the design and use of all new facilities and the repurposing of existing facilities (sub-delegated to GFC Facilities Development Committee)

5. Responsibilities Additional to Delegated Authority

5.1 Receive an information session on the proposed budget each year just prior to being introduced to the Board approval process, and receive information on the budget, however 'soft', at the first GFC meeting in September.

6. Delegations from General Faculties Council

Should be reviewed at least every three years and reported to GFC.

6.1 The PSLA allows GFC to delegate its responsibilities to GFC standing committees and other persons. Specific delegations from GFC are outlined in the following:

[GFC Delegations](#)

7. Limitations to Authority

GFC is subject to the authority of the Board of Governors

8. Reporting

GFC reports regularly to the Board of Governors with respect to its activities and decisions through the GFC nominee to the Board of Governors.

9. Definitions

Reapportionment - The process by which the number of members that may be elected by each Faculty is determined. This number elected faculty members shall be proportional to the number of faculty members in each Faculty. The number of elected undergraduate student members shall be proportional to the number of undergraduate students in each Faculty. It is, in effect, a "representation-by-population" system. Reapportionment occurs every three years.

Academic staff – as defined by the [Recruitment Policy \(Appendix A\) Definition and Categories of Academic Staff, Administrators and Colleagues](#) in UAPPOL

Non-Academic staff – as defined by the [Recruitment Policy \(Appendix B\) Definition and Categories of Support Staff](#) in UAPPOL

AASUA – [Association of Academic Staff University of Alberta](#)

NASA – [Non-Academic Staff Association](#)

10. Links

[Procedure for Reapportionment](#)



[GFC Apportionment Table](#)

[Post-Secondary Learning Act \(2003\)](#)

Approved by General Faculties Council:
April 29, 2019
September 20, 2021