



General Faculties Council  
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, November 23, 2020  
Virtual Meeting  
2:00 PM - 5:00 PM

**ATTENDEES:**

**Statutory Members:**

***Ex-Officio:***

Bill Flanagan  
Chris Andersen  
Dale Askey  
Barbara Billingsley  
Stanford Blade  
Greta Cummings  
Neal Davies  
Steven Dew  
Walter Dixon  
Joseph Doucet  
Fraser Forbes  
Todd Gilchrist  
Robert Haennel  
Brenda Hemmelgarn  
Shanthi Johnson  
Matina Kalcounis-Rueppell  
Maria Mayan  
Brooke Milne  
Pierre-Yves Mocquais  
Kerry Mummery  
Melissa Padfield  
Steve Patten  
Andrew Sharman  
Kelly Spencer  
Catherine Swindlehurst  
Demetres Tryphonopoulos  
Jennifer Tupper

***Elected Faculty:***

Jason Acker  
W. Ted Allison  
J Nelson Amaral  
Nicholas Beier  
Pamela Brett-MacLean  
Robert Burrell  
Heather Coleman  
Piet Defraeye  
Michael Dyck  
Gary Eitzen  
Anastasia Elias  
Mary Forhan  
Bill Foster

Michael Frishkopf  
Basil Hubbard  
Christine Hughes  
Peter Hurd  
Marianne Jacquet  
Nat Kav  
Jessica Kolopenuk  
Pierre Lemelin  
Kathleen Lowrey  
Susanne Luhmann  
Derek MacKenzie  
Pirkko Markula  
Sean McMurtry  
Al Meldrum  
Sue-Ann Mok  
Roger Moore  
Sarah Moore  
Shannon O'Byrne  
Sujata Persad  
Frances Plane  
Elena Posse de Chaves  
Cheryl Poth  
Christina Rinaldi  
Keith Rourke  
Victoria Ruetalo  
Carolyn Sale  
Susan Sommerfeldt  
Eleni Stroulia  
Kisha Supernant  
Alan Underhill  
Mani Vaidyanathan  
Akiko Watanabe  
Jonathan White  
Lynne Wiltse  
Minn-Nyoung Yoon  
Yan Yuan

***Students:***

David Draper  
Katie Kidd  
Sachiketha Reddy

**Appointed Members:**

Ricardo Acuna  
Joel Agarwal

Susan Babcock  
Samar Barazesh  
Paramita Chaudhuri Basu  
Chris Beasley  
Dhir Bid  
Amlan Bose  
Karl Buchanan  
Daniela Carbajal  
Meijun Chen  
Breda Cormack  
André Costopoulos  
Nicole de Grano  
Talia Dixon  
Eric Einarson  
Shannon Erichsen  
Jennifer Fang  
Shawn Flynn  
Christian Fotang  
Makboolee Fyith  
Simran Ghoman  
Shivani Gupta  
Jill Hall  
Simran Kaur Dhillon  
Zaryab Khan  
Emily Kimani  
David Konrad  
Rahul Korde  
Janice Kung  
Hollis Lai  
Sharonne Lee  
Christopher Lupke  
Habba Mahal  
Angie Mandeville  
Adekunle Mofolasayo  
Abner Monteiro  
Emily Motoska  
Gaser Nagah  
Ana Oliveira  
Yusuf Oliya  
Jacob Park  
Nicole Patrie  
David Ren  
Tyler Saretzky  
Sarah Severson

Khandaker Akib Shahriar  
Catrina Shellenberg  
Aadhavya Sivakumaran  
Lee Smith  
Andrei Tabirca  
Shahed Taghian  
Dehaghani  
Frederick Tappenden  
Edward Tiet  
Dilini Vethanayagam  
Mansimran Virk  
Marc Waddingham  
Adan Wang  
Adrian Wattamaniuk  
Donna Wilson  
Adrienne Wright  
Ding Xu  
Xinxin Zhang  
Francine (Yuheng) Zhou

**REGRETS:**

Ananya Sarkar  
Adarsh Badesha  
Marwan Burhani  
Yiming Chen  
Purna Hariharan  
Harnoor Kochar  
Devshri Lala  
Lucas Marques  
Dan Romanyk  
Amy Tse  
Kristof Van Assche

**Staff:**

Brad Hamdon, General  
Counsel and University  
Secretary  
Kate Peters, GFC  
Secretary  
Heather Richholt, Scribe  
University Governance:  
Ann Hodgson  
Edyta McLoughlin  
Laura Riley

## **OPENING SESSION**

### 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 General Faculties Council (GFC)

*Discussion:*

The Chair welcomed members and read the following territorial acknowledgement:

The University of Alberta resides on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. This territory is a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples whose histories, languages and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community. To acknowledge the territory is to recognize the longer history of these lands. The acknowledgement signifies our commitment to working in Good Relations with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples as we engage in our institutional work, uplifting the whole people, for the University for Tomorrow.

A member proposed that the order of items on the agenda be changed to ensure the discussion on Academic Restructuring occurred before the ranking exercise, giving members a chance to discuss and ask further questions before choosing their preferred model. The Chair agreed to change the order of items 5 and 6.

Motion: Doucet/Moore

THAT the General Faculties Council approve the agenda as amended.

**CARRIED**

### 2. Comments from the Chair

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

*Discussion:*

The Chair spoke about some of the challenges facing members of the university community including budget challenges related to funding cuts, loss of jobs and of connection with colleagues, and other pressures related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chair apologized for not reacting appropriately to a member's comments at the town hall the previous week and acknowledged that respectful dialogue is key and at the core of collegial governance.

The Chair noted that the Board of Governors was keenly awaiting guidance from GFC on Academic Restructuring and that he was convinced that we could move forward and preserve this great university.

The Chair informed members that he had been asked to make a decision to delay the start of the 2021 winter term to ease some of the burdens on students and instructors related to remote learning. Vice-Provost and Registrar Padfield explained that her office was working with Faculties to address any issues with this and to ensure that any exceptions to this were clear.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Omnibus Mover and Seconder: Doucet/Amaral

3. A. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of September 28, 2020

THAT General Faculties Council approve the Open Session Minutes of September 28, 2020.

**CARRIED**

B. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of October 19, 2020

THAT General Faculties Council approve the Open Session Minutes of October 19, 2020.

**CARRIED**

4. New Members

**TO RECEIVE:**

The following statutory faculty member who has been elected by their Faculty to serve on GFC for a term of office beginning November 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021:

Pamela Brett-MacLean, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

The following statutory faculty member who has been elected by their Faculty to serve on GFC for a term of office beginning November 10, 2020 and ending June 30, 2023:

Jessica Kolopenuk, Faculty of Native Studies

The following statutory ex-officio member, to serve on GFC for a term of office beginning October 26, 2020 and extending for the duration of the appointment:

Todd Gilchrist, Vice-President University Services & Finance

**CARRIED**

**TO APPOINT:**

The following undergraduate student representatives to serve on GFC for terms commencing upon approval and ending April 30, 2021:

Edward Tiet, Faculty of Education

Catrina Shellenberg, Faculty of Education

Francine (Yuheng) Zhou, Faculty of Education

**CARRIED**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

5. Academic Restructuring: Revised Proposals

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* Bill Flanagan, President and Vice-Chancellor, and Chair of GFC; Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

*Purpose of the Proposal:* To review and discuss the final proposals from the Academic Restructuring Working Group.

*Discussion:*

The Chair reminded members of the sequence of next steps for academic restructuring including the current discussion followed by the December 7 meeting when GFC would consider and recommend on a proposal to be forwarded to the Board of Governors at their meeting of December 11. The Chair acknowledged the tight timeline but observed that it was important to meet these targets to be able to achieve the required budget reductions for this and the subsequent fiscal year.

Dr Dew acknowledged the concerns they heard from the community through the consultations about the speed of the changes and the conflicting thoughts about the models. He noted that all three models presented provided similar savings and went over some of the key points and differences and presented slides of the Consolidation Model, the College Model, and the Hybrid Model.

During the discussion, members asked questions and expressed comments including but not limited to:

- a proposal for an "Invisible College Model" that had been developed by some faculty members and circulated to some members of GFC which did not include an additional layer of Executive Dean leadership;
- an observation that challenges regarding interdisciplinarity, and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) were different in different Faculties and that an overarching plan to address these might not be the best approach;
- whether optimal solutions regarding EDI and Interdisciplinarity should come from the Faculties themselves rather than be imposed by Executive Deans;
- that a shared services model similar to the "Invisible College Model" had been considered and rejected by the Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG) because there was no accountability to the academic mission in the administrative leadership structure and because it did not address the non-financial goals of Academic Restructuring;
- questions about decision making and whether there would be several models to choose from at the December 7 meeting;
- disciplinary alignments that would be created in a Faculty of Arts and Science and in a College of Natural and Applied Sciences;
- the declining trend of including science requirements in Arts degrees and arts requirements in Science degrees over the past years;
- the push from government for collaboration between natural and applied sciences and the importance of curiosity driven research;
- concerns with how Faculty Evaluation Committees (FECs) would work in a large combined Faculty;
- the vision for Deans and Deans' Council and the mechanism for Deans to connect with the Provost in the new structures;
- the success of a shared services type model in other business structures;
- whether the office of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) could take on the role of driving academic interdisciplinarity among the Faculties;
- that diversity of opinions was a normal result in a diverse community;
- whether a College of Arts and Science would be a better option and allow the Faculties to retain their autonomy;
- the "Faculty tax" which would support a college level structure;
- whether or not the role of Executive Dean had been successful in the several Australian universities that had implemented that level of leadership;
- whether an Executive Dean with a salary equivalent to that of 5 front line staff was affordable and whether more hierarchy in leadership was needed;
- whether a shared service model as presented in the "Invisible College Model" would allow for Service Centre Managers to work with the Deans to find the necessary savings;
- that higher-level collegial and strategic decision making was necessary to preserve academic excellence;
- that a shared services model would speak to administrative concerns but would not actually address academic restructuring;
- that the issue of authority and decision making was very important and that was why the shared services model was not put forward by the ARWG;
- the concern of autonomy of academic Faculties over their strategic direction;
- the importance of Faculty autonomy for reasons related to prestige, professional accreditation, and reputation;

- an opinion that all of the models presented by the ARWG were adding extra layers of expensive administration which did not make sense in a budget crisis;
- a criticism of the composition of the ARWG and the consultation process and the perceived lack of transparency regarding the data that was used to develop the models;
- that GFC did not have to recommend one of the ARWG's models but could recommend the "Invisible College Model" instead;
- how the College Model could allow for synergies in the Health Sciences disciplines while also allowing them to retain their Faculty identity and professional reputations;
- whether Dentistry could become its own Faculty or School under one of the new structures;
- the impact of the budget cuts on jobs and student service;
- student feedback regarding their place in the consultation and feelings from some that their concerns had not been listened to;
- that EDI needed to be a priority in academic restructuring;
- that Executive Deans would not be able to have much of an effect unless they had financial control;
- that it was important to consider public perception and how the university's structure looked from the outside;
- student government representation on the ARWG and the various efforts that had been made to solicit and communicate feedback from the student body;
- uncertainly as to whether being nimble was virtue in a university or if it was better to move more slowly since trends come and go;
- an opinion that most students would choose the most conservative path because they felt they did not have enough information to choose a riskier option;
- that the university could use the opportunity of restructuring to make real change and reform in areas such as EDI;
- concerns about striking the proper balance between academic and economic autonomy of the Faculties and the power of the Executive Dean role to make changes, and whether strategic leadership could be improved within in the existing leadership structure;
- support from the Department of Psychology for a College or Faculty of Arts and Science;
- whether the Executive Dean role could be temporary through the first few years of the new structure;
- EDI concerns related to elimination of precarious positions, such as front line staff and sessional instructors, and creation of higher paid administrative roles;
- whether the GFC Academic Planning Committee could be given an opportunity to evaluate the "Invisible College Model";
- concerns about too much authority resting with a small group of high level administrators and the importance of collegial governance in decision making for the university;
- support for the opportunity for Faculties to collaborate to support field experience but concern that these programs will face challenges with the large cuts to support staff; and
- a member raised concerns about blurring the line between governance and administration and pointed out that strategic decisions are made through governance and that it was administration's job to support that.

At one point in the discussion, a member of GFC started to propose a motion from the floor regarding the "Invisible College Model". Another member called a point of order to dispute their statements regarding the work and the transparency of the ARWG. The Chair ruled there had been no breach of the rules and invited the member to continue. Another member called a point of order regarding the motion from the floor noting that not all members had received the details of the "Invisible College Model" and thus GFC could not be asked to make a decision on it. The Chair agreed that the proposed motion from the floor was out of order and the discussion resumed.

In response to a question about next steps, Dr Dew responded that there had been enough interest expressed in the "Invisible College Model" that it would need to be addressed in some way.

Motion: Amaral/Doucet

**Motion from the floor**

THAT General Faculties Council extend the meeting for an additional twenty minutes to continue the discussion on Academic Restructuring.

**CARRIED**

Motion: Draper/Dixon

**Motion from the floor**

THAT General Faculties Council extend the meeting for an additional ten minutes to allow for questions.

**CARRIED**

6. Exercise to gather information from members on Academic Restructuring Proposals at General Faculties Council (GFC)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

*Purpose of the Proposal:* GFC is being asked to approve a motion to allow for a ranking exercise to anonymously express their preferences on faculty structure to encourage engagement from all members of GFC.

The item was withdrawn.

**INFORMATION REPORTS**

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

7. Report of the GFC Executive Committee

8. COVID-19 Governance Decision Tracker

9. Report of the GFC Academic Planning Committee

10. Report of the GFC Programs Committee

11. GFC Nominations and Elections

12. Report from the Board of Governors

13. Information Items

A. 2019/20 Student Financial Support Annual Report

B. 2019/20 Annual Report of the Student Conduct Responses, Dean of Students' Portfolio

C. Annual Report of Appeals and Compliance Officer (2019-2020)

D. General Appeals Committee (GAC) Annual Report to General Faculties Council (July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020)

14. Information Forwarded to GFC Members Between Meetings
- [Deadline Attached] GFC Nominating Committee Report to GFC re: 20/21 Membership Replenishment (October 27, 2020)
  - October 27, 2020 Nominating Committee Report
  - Information on Financial Estimates - Available for review
  - Correspondence from Chair of GFC

**CLOSING SESSION**

15. Adjournment
- Next Meeting of General Faculties Council: December 7, 2020

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.