



General Faculties Council
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, December 06, 2021
Zoom Virtual Meeting
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Statutory Members:

Ex-Officio:

Bill Flanagan, Chair
Simaan AbouRizk
Chris Andersen
Dale Askey
Barbara Billingsley
Stanford Blade
Steven Dew
Brenda Hemmelgarn
Nick Holt
Tammy Hopper
Christine Hughes
Shanthi Johnson
Diane Kunyk
Elan MacDonald
Brooke Milne
Pierre-Yves Mocquais
Melissa Padfield
Aminah Robinson Fayek
Wendy Rodgers
Andrew Sharman
Demetres
Tryphonopoulos
Jennifer Tupper
Frederick West

Elected Faculty:

Jason Acker
Sandeep Agrawal
J Nelson Amaral
Saadet Andrews
Nicholas Beier
Jennifer Branch-Mueller
Marie Carrière
Heather Coleman
Gary Eitzen
Anastasia Elias
Jaymie Heilman
Michael Hendzel
Peter Hurd
Nat Kav
Jessica Kolopenuk
Vadim Kravchinsky

Hollis Lai
Jacqueline Leighton
Pierre Lemelin
Kathleen Lowrey
Derek MacKenzie
Al Meldrum
Sarah Moore
Weimin Mou
Jerine Pegg
Sujata Persad
Elena Posse de Chaves
Dan Romanyk
Victoria Ruetalo
Carolyn Sale
John Spence
Alan Underhill
Kristof Van Assche
Jonathan White
Shauna Wilton
Richard Wozniak
Moin Yahya
Nese Yuksel

Students:

Talia Dixon
Kathy Haddadkar
Abner Monteiro

Appointed Members:

Ghalia Aamer
Nikita Adekar
Susan Babcock
Samar Barazesh
Andrew Batycki
Chris Beasley
Vaughn Beaulieu-
Mercredi
Marsha Boyd
Heather Bruce
Chiara Concini
André Costopoulos
Greta Cummings
Maddie Dempsey
Andy Deprato
Joseph Doucet

Anas Fassih
Shawn Flynn
Kyle Foster
Lisa Glock
Jill Hall
Emily Holden
Matina Kalcounis-
Rueppell
Harnoor Kalra
Simran Kaur Dhillon
Rokhand Khademi
David Konrad
Georgia Korfeh
Jenny Lam
Rowan Ley
Maggie Lin
Andrew Locke
Angie Mandeville
Tim Mills
Adekunle Mofolasayo
Emily Motoska
Sanhita Pal
Laura Reifferscheid
Sarah Severson
Khandaker Akib Shahriar
Sophie Shi
Chanpreet Singh
Allison Sivak
Cindy Sun
Andrei Tabirca
Frederick Tappenden
Phillip Vandevalk
Dilini Vethanayagam
Julia Villosio
Adrian Wattamaniuk
Kyle Whitlock
Adrienne Wright
Ding Xu
Shuce Zhang
REGRETS:
Ashmeen Aneja
Heba Aref
Ahmed Bouferguene

Robert Burrell
Nicole de Grano
Devin Doherty
Michael Dyck
Levi Flaman
Todd Gilchrist
Tahmid Al Hafiz
Carol Hodgson Birkman
Gurleen Kaur
Mohit Kumar
Shashi Kumar
Jesse Lafontaine
Devshri Lala
Runjuan Liu
Tia Marko
Sourayan Mookerjea
Reagan Morris
Kyle Murray
Mario Nascimento
Yusuf Oliya
Mary Olukotun
Steve Patten
Frances Plane
Keith Rourke
Aadhavya Sivakumaran
Shubham Soni
Laura Stovel
Rama Taha
Siddharth Thakur
Amy Tse
Mani Vaidyanathan
Akanksha Yeola
Yan Yuan
Staff:
Brad Hamdon, General
Counsel and University
Secretary
Kate Peters, GFC
Secretary
Heather Richholt, Scribe
University Governance:
Edyta McLoughlin
Laura Riley

OPENING SESSION

2. Report from the President

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:

Before calling the meeting to order the Chair made the following territorial acknowledgement:

We are located on Treaty 6 territory. We respect the histories, languages, and cultures of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.

The Chair observed that it was the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, a day to pause and consider our collective responsibility to prevent gender-based violence and remember all those impacted, including the 14 women who were killed on this day in 1989 at the Ecole Polytechnique. He noted thanks to the Students' Union and the Non-Academic Staff Association for organizing a memorial and asked members to take a moment to reflect.

The Chair spoke about the adjournment of the November 29th meeting out of respect to for the undergraduate student representatives and all those in the community who had experienced sexual violence.

Provost and Vice-President (Academic) Steven Dew referenced his letters of November 17 and December 3, 2021 and the university leadership's unequivocal respect for students' right to protest, and appreciation for their ongoing efforts to raise awareness around sexual violence. He confirmed his commitment to working on the calls to action toward a shared goal of a University free of sexual violence.

The Chair called the meeting to order and reminded members that this was a continuation of the November 29th meeting and that the agenda had already been approved.

The Chair referenced his report and noted the reappointment of Chris Andersen as the Dean of the Faculty of Native Studies for a second five-year term until June 30, 2028.

The Chair spoke about the GFC *ad hoc* Committee that was struck to examine the consultations and action processes for academic restructuring in the fall of 2020 and invited the GFC *ad hoc* Committee's Chair, elected faculty representative Heather Coleman, to provide an update on their work to present.

Dr Coleman noted that the committee was working through the public consultation materials and minutes of the Academic Restructuring Working Group, that they had met three times so far, and that their aim was to make suggestions for improving the process of consultation for the future.

CONSENT AGENDA

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Consent Agenda Mover and Seconder: Coleman/Acker

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of October 25, 2021

Item was deferred.

4. New Members of GFC

TO RECEIVE:

The following statutory faculty member who has been elected/re-elected by their Faculty, to serve on GFC for term of office beginning November 29, 2021 and ending June 30, 2024:
Ahmed Bouferguène, Faculté Saint-Jean

CARRIED

ACTION ITEMS

5. Notice of Motion: Proposed General Faculties Council (GFC) Standing Committee on Governance and Procedural Oversight

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee because at the October 25, 2021 meeting of GFC, a notice of motion for debate at the next GFC meeting was made pursuant to rule 8.7 of the GFC Meeting Procedural Rules.

Discussion:

The Chair introduced the item and noted that the GFC Meeting Procedural Rule 8.7 allows members to make a notice of motion for debate at the next GFC meeting. He noted that elected faculty member Carolyn Sale made a notice of motion to discuss the terms of reference for a GFC standing committee on governance and procedural oversight at the GFC meeting of October 25. He explained that since the Executive Committee holds delegated authority to recommend to GFC on matters related to governance and procedural oversight, GFC Executive Committee was also asked to recommend on this motion at their November 15th meeting.

Dr Sale spoke to her motion and noted:

- that the committee dealing with governance and procedural oversight needed to be a committee of GFC with composition and terms of reference established by GFC and reporting directly to GFC;
- that GFC had the choice to take an action that was consistent with good governance;
- that it was unsurprising that Executive Committee did not recommend this motion since they took the unprecedented move to create a subcommittee to work on governance matters;
- that the subcommittee was not consistent with the GFC Roles and Responsibilities document;
- that a subcommittee existing two removes from GFC is not consistent with collegial governance principles as set out in documents like the Duff-Berdahl report as it provides two opportunities for senior administration to exert control rather than providing for open, deliberative decision-making at GFC;
- that Executive established the subcommittee without consulting GFC and the decision should have been GFC's to make
- that this was not inclusive and collegial governance and not what the *ad hoc* Committee on Academic Governance Including Delegated Authority wanted in 2017 when they said this authority should be given to Executive Committee;
- that GFC needed to be in clear control of their own governance; and
- that as a matter of good governance, GFC should approve this motion to create a new Standing Committee with the authority over governance and procedural oversight that is currently delegated to Executive Committee, with any additional procedure that might be required arranged to make it so.

The Chair asked GFC Executive Committee's Vice-Chair, elected faculty member, Anastasia Elias to speak to Executive's decision not to recommend approval of Dr Sale's motion.

Dr Elias made note of the following points:

- that GFC Executive holds delegated authority from GFC over governance and procedural oversight as recommended by the *ad hoc* Committee on Academic Governance Including Delegated Authority in 2017;

- that the *ad hoc* also recommended that Executive conduct a regular 3-year review of terms of reference and delegations of authority;
- that Executive's delegated authority to approve the GFC agenda was aligned with its responsibility over governance and procedural oversight and Executive committee felt that separating these authorities would constitute overlap;
- that the *ad hoc* Governance and Procedural Review Committee established by GFC Executive in spring 2021 to conduct the review of the GFC Principles documents had around 8 hours of meetings which delved into these matters and discussed feedback from members of GFC;
- that the new Executive Governance and Procedural Oversight subcommittee was established to conduct ongoing work of the 3-year reviews and had no delegated authority;
- that if GFC was unhappy that Executive created a subcommittee there could certainly be a discussion about that; and
- that Executive did not see the purpose in setting up a new standing committee and dividing the responsibility in this way.

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

- whether a NASA staff member could be added to the composition of the proposed new committee;
- whether there were positions for members other than elected faculty members on the proposed new committee;
- a comparison of the membership of the proposed new committee and the subcommittee of Executive;
- the value in reporting directly to GFC on these matters; and
- the potential conflicts of authority between the proposed committee and Executive.

THAT General Faculties Council create a standing committee on governance and procedural oversight with the responsibilities and composition set out in attachment 1.

DEFEATED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

6. Question Period

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 asked if there were any follow up questions and asked that questions about the Academic Leaders Task Group Report be addressed during the discussion of the item later in the agenda.

A member asked about an incident where the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry had no access to their VCS Servers which were previously operated by MED IT and the university's evaluation of the cost impact in relation to patient care. Associate Vice-President and Chief Information Officer Mike MacGregor explained the reasons behind the outage.

A member thanked GFC for their solidarity and ally-ship with the students and asked how GFC could contribute to the harmonizing of all policies around sexual violence. Provost Dew replied that sexual violence was a Board of Governors and campus responsibility. He noted that GFC was one of the key stakeholders in the conversations about sexual violence prevention and would be involved in the conversations coming forward.

A member asked whether governance meetings would be held in person in January. GFC Secretary Kate Peters replied that this was a committee by committee question and pending public health requirements these discussions would happen in January but that the hybrid format would not likely work for GFC as Council Chambers was not hybrid-friendly.

A member asked about the metrics report in the meeting materials and how and why changes were made to the reporting structure that was recommended by GFC. She also asked for further clarification on the ratio of savings to administrative staff changes. Provost Dew explained there had been changes to the financial metric, especially regarding the annualized cost of changes to positions and explained that the Board has been tracking restructuring changes using a dashboard and accounting mechanisms. He noted that their methodology is different in terms of accounting methods and because of the difference between the academic and the financial year.

A member asked about the Student Financial Supports Annual Report in the meeting materials and noted that a more granular demographic breakdown would be useful. Vice-Provost and Registrar Melissa Padfield replied that there were constraints in the level of data that could be shared because of privacy issues and context around demographic information.

A member asked about safety and security on campus and whether protective services had their budget cut. Vice-President (Facilities and Operations) Andrew Sharman noted that the budget for protective services had not been cut.

A member asked about international student need-based financial supports. Ms Padfield spoke about international student bursaries and grant opportunities.

7. Residence Community Standards Policy

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Janice Johnson, Assistant Dean (Residence Life and Education)

Purpose of the Proposal: To discuss the proposed updates to the Residence Community Standards Policy, and the creation of associated procedures and an information document in the University of Alberta Policies and Procedures Online (UAPPOL) as set out in the attached.

Discussion:

Ms Johnson noted that they had been working with restorative justice methods in residences for over ten years and that they were codifying the work they do in UAPPOL for clarity and transparency and so that updates could be made to the documents more regularly. She made note of the updates that had been made after the consultation process and pointed out that it was important to remember that restorative justice was not always the best response for all incidents and that the Code of Student Behaviour and the Sexual Violence Policy would always take precedence.

There was no discussion.

8. Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy

Materials and presentation before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee to provide a progress update, share the draft policy suite, and continue discussions related to the advancement of the Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation Policy for the University of Alberta.

Discussion:

Dr Nychka gave a presentation on the draft policy and procedure and transition from GFC Policy 111. He made note of the change from the concept of student "evaluation" or "instructor rating" to one reflective of student "perspectives" and "experience" of teaching. Dr Nychka also spoke about alignment with the Framework for Effective Teaching, the focus on multifaceted evaluation of teaching, and the aim to identify and address biases

within the survey process. Dr Nychka also discussed the development and consultation process and asked members to share feedback in the meeting or through email.

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

- the psychometric process of validation meant to ensure acceptable levels of consistency in the qualitative feedback of survey questions;
- a reminder that the process of developing a new policy began five years ago with the concern that the process was biased;
- whether it was possible to ensure that all bias could be eliminated from the process;
- the change in design that was meant to mitigate bias and allow for continued refinement;
- that survey results should not be used for employee evaluation but instead should be used for instructor education;
- an expression of gratitude to the experts who were working on the development of this new process;
- the importance of balancing concerns about bias with the importance of meaningful student feedback;
- the best time in the semester for surveys to be given to students; and
- the impact of restructuring on the administrative processes involved in reviewing survey data.

9. Final Report on the Academic Leaders Task Group

Materials and presentation before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee to share information about the work of the Academic Leaders Task Group (ALTG), a group charged with undertaking a review of academic leadership roles in the context of the U of A's new academic structure to understand how to best deploy one of the university's most critical resources: our professors.

Discussion:

Dr Dew presented on the ALTG's Principles and Objectives and the report that was released on November 4. He noted that the report consisted of data, analysis, objectives, and options but did not contain a prescriptive way forward because a design to move forward with the University of Alberta for Tomorrow (UAT) restructuring would need to integrate the other initiatives that were related to implementation of the College Model.

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

- an opinion that this item did not have enough time for discussion at GFC given the profound impact it would have on the academics of the institution;
- questions about when the final proposed course of action would be shared;
- an opinion that the proposed options in the report were terrible and should be opposed by GFC;
- that various policies, procedures, and collective agreements lay out the roles and responsibilities of Deans and Chairs and that much of this was not GFC's authority;
- how to ensure the best graduate student services in the Colleges and in the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research;
- that the Graduate Students' Association felt it was important to keep services for graduate and undergraduate students separate;
- that UAT aimed to involve academic leaders in key strategic functions where it was necessary to have someone who understood the discipline but savings would be realized by centralizing less strategic administrative functions at the College-level;
- difficulties with defining and separating strategic and non-strategic leadership roles;
- that an environmental scan of universities and Uniforum benchmarking showed that there was a high variability of how administrative functions were organized and no one approach that worked best;
- that there was opportunity to be creative and develop excellent and more efficient processes and structures;
- that people all over the university were struggling with the loss of positions and fatigue;

- whether metrics would be able to measure efficiencies and help inform continuous improvements;
- impacts of the loss of department-level academic leaders on the academic units;
- the role of the Chair in the new structure;
- the role of the Associate Chair to support the development of junior faculty;
- the wide variations in size of departments and availability of academic leaders; and
- that even if a professor was not needed for a certain operational role they brought a valuable perspective to that role.

Motion: Coleman/Mocquais

Motion from the floor:

THAT the General Faculties Council extend the meeting to 4:15 p.m.

CARRIED

INFORMATION REPORTS

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

10. Report of the GFC Executive Committee
11. Report of the GFC Academic Planning Committee
12. Report of the GFC Programs Committee
13. GFC Nominations and Elections
- November 9, 2021 NC Report to GFC
14. Information Items:
 - A. Metrics associated with academic restructuring
 - B. Report on Undergraduate Financial Support
 - C. Academic Schedule
 - D. Exploration Credits - Request for Feedback
 - E. Future of Continuing Professional Education
 - F. Path forward for the GFC Guiding Documents
 - G. COVID-19 Governance Emergency Protocols Decision Tracker
15. Information Forwarded to GFC Members Between Meetings
- University of Alberta Mail - Request for Feedback_ Draft Indigenous Institutional Strategic Plan

CLOSING SESSION

16. Adjournment
- Next Meeting of General Faculties Council: January 31, 2022

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:20 p.m.