



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, February 28, 2022
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
Todd Gilchrist
Brenda Hemmelgarn
Nick Holt
Tammy Hopper
Christine Hughes
Shanthi Johnson
Diane Kunyk
Elan MacDonald
Brooke Milne
Pierre-Yves Mocquais
Kyle Murray
Melissa Padfield
Steve Patten
Aminah Robinson Fayek
Wendy Rodgers
Andrew Sharman
Demetres
Tryphonopoulos
Jennifer Tupper
Frederick West

Elected Faculty:

Jason Acker
J Nelson Amaral
Ahmed Bouferguene
Jennifer Branch-Mueller
Marie Carrière
Heather Coleman
Gary Eitzen
Anastasia Elias
Jaymie Heilman
Michael Hendzel
Carol Hodgson Birkman
Peter Hurd

Nat Kav
Vadim Kravchinski
Hollis Lai
Jacqueline Leighton
Pierre Lemelin
Runjuan Liu
Kathleen Lowrey
Derek MacKenzie
Al Meldrum
Jerine Pegg
Sujata Persad
Frances Plane
Elena Posse de Chaves
Dan Romanyk
Keith Rourke
Victoria Ruetalo
Carolyn Sale
John Spence
Laura Stovel
Amy Tse

Alan Underhill
Mani Vaidyanathan
Kristof Van Assche
Shauna Wilton
Richard Wozniak
Moin Yahya
Nese Yuksel

Students:

Talia Dixon
Kathy Haddadkar

Appointed Members:

Ghalia Aamer
Heba Aref
Marsha Boyd
Heather Bruce
Chiara Concini
Greta Cummings
Joseph Doucet
Ryan Dunch
Anas Fassih
Levi Flaman
Shawn Flynn
Kyle Foster

Tahmid Al Hafiz
Jill Hall
Emily Holden
Matina Kalcounis-
Rueppell
Gurleen Kaur
Rokhand Khademi
Valentina Kozlova
Jesse Lafontaine
Devshri Lala
Shing Lao
Rowan Ley
Andrew Locke
Tim Mills
Sourayan Mookerjea
Sarah Moore
Mario Nascimento
Adekunle Mofolasayo
Mary Olukotun
Sanhita Pal
Laura Reifferscheid
Sophie Shi
Allison Sivak
Shubham Soni
Cindy Sun
Frederick Tappenden
Helen Vallianatos
Dilini Vethanayagam
Adrian Wattamaniuk
Kyle Whitlock
Adrienne Wright
Shuce Zhang

REGRETS:

Nikita Adekar
Sandeep Agrawal
Saadet Andrews
Ashmeen Aneja
Susan Babcock
Samar Barazesh
Andrew Batycki
Chris Beasley
Vaughn Beaulieu-
Mercredi

Nicholas Beier
Robert Burrell
Nicole de Grano
Maddie Dempsey
Andy Deprato
Devin Doherty
Michael Dyck
Lisa Glock
Harnoor Kalra
Simran Kaur Dhillon
Jessica Kolopenuk
Georgia Korfeh
Mohit Kumar
Shashi Kumar
Jenny Lam
Maggie Lin
Angie Mandeville
Tia Marko
Abner Monteiro
Reagan Morris
Emily Motoska
Weimin Mou
Yusuf Oliya
Sarah Severson
Khandaker Akib Shahriar
Chanpreet Singh
Aadhavya Sivakumaran
Andrei Tabirca
Rama Taha
Siddharth Thakur
Phillip Vandevalk
Julia Villoso
Akanksha Yeola
Yan Yuan
Staff:
Brad Hamdon, General
Counsel and University
Secretary
Kate Peters, GFC
Secretary
Heather Richholt, Scribe
Edyta McLoughlin
Laura Riley

OPENING SESSION

Before calling the meeting to order, the Chair acknowledged that "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 also spoke about the conflict in Ukraine, expressed solidarity with those who have close ties in the region, and noted work to ensure support for students and staff who were affected.

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 GFC

Motion: Dixon/Tupper

THAT General Faculties Council approve the agenda.

CARRIED

2. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

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

Discussion:

In his comments, the Chair made note of:

- the provincial budget:
 - the continuing reduction to the university's provincial grant;
 - the university's restructuring efforts to reduce administrative costs and preserve core teaching, research, and community engagement mission;
 - new investment for enrolment growth in high demand programs; and
 - potential for growth with the new funding programs;
- the announcement of the appointment of Robert Woods as the new Dean of the Faculty of Arts for a five-year term effective July 1, 2022; and
- thanks to Steve Patten for his leadership of the Faculty of Arts over the past two years.

GFC elected faculty representative Mario Nascimento, and GFC elected graduate student representative Emily Holden, both members of the GFC Nominating Committee, were invited to speak and asked members to reach out to their students and colleagues to encourage them to get involved in academic governance and put their names forward for vacancies on GFC and GFC standing committees.

Heather Coleman, GFC elected faculty representative and chair of the GFC ad hoc Committee for the Formal Review of the Consultations and Action Processes for Academic Restructuring in the Fall of 2020, presented a brief update on the work of the committee. She noted that the committee was putting the final touches on their report and would send it to the Executive Committee the following week.

CONSENT AGENDA

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Consent Agenda Mover and Seconder: Dixon/Tupper

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of December 6, 2021 and January 31, 2022

THAT General Faculties Council approve the open session minutes of December 6, 2021, and January 31, 2022.

CARRIED

4. New Members of GFC

TO APPOINT:

The following graduate student representative at-large to serve on GFC for a term commencing February 28, 2022 and ending April 30, 2022:

- Shing Kit Lao, Science

CARRIED

ACTION ITEMS

5. Approval of the Proposed Residence Community Standards Policy Suite and Rescission of the Current University of Alberta Residence Community Standards Policy

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Janice Johnson, Assistant Dean (Residence Life and Education), Office of the Dean of Students (Student Services); Alison Exner, Supervisor, Residence Life - Community Support

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is to request approval of the Residence Community Standards policy suite in University of Alberta Policies and Procedures Online (UAPPOL) and rescission of the current Residence Community Standards Policy.

Discussion:

The Chair noted that this item had been to GFC for discussion twice and was recommended by the GFC Student Conduct Policy Committee. He thanked J. Johnson and A. Exner for their work on the revised policy suite and opened the floor for discussion.

There was no discussion.

Motion: Dixon/Tupper

THAT the General Faculties Council recommend that the Board of Governors approve the proposed UAPPOL Residence Community Standards policy suite, as set forth in Attachments 2 and 3, and the rescission of the current Residence Community Standards Policy, as set forth in Attachment 5, all to take effect August 1, 2022.

CARRIED

6. Approval of the Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy Suite and Rescission of GFC Policy Manual Section 111: Teaching and Learning and Teaching Evaluation

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic); Wendy Rodgers, Deputy Provost; John Nychka, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives)

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee to seek approval of the Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation Policy Suite and concurrent rescission of GFC Policy 111.

Discussion:

The Chair noted that this policy suite had come several times to GFC for early consultation and discussion, and was recommended with a small amendment by the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE). He explained that CLE would have the delegated authority to approve future revisions to the procedures.

S Dew acknowledged that there had been a significant number of conversations at CLE and in other venues, which had contributed to the development of the proposal.

W Rodgers indicated that GFC Policy 111 was being restructured as a new policy suite to better serve the needs of the university. She acknowledged the work of the previous and current Vice-Provosts (Learning Initiatives) and specialists in the Centre for Research in Applied Measurement and Evaluation (CRAME) who would be doing pilot work on the student evaluation instrument.

J Nychka spoke about the Framework for Effective Teaching and its influence on the policy transformation. He noted that the survey tool would continue to be developed and that the goal was to bring the revised instrument back to GFC for approval in winter 2023.

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

- whether the new questions would be translated into French for Saint-Jean students;
- whether changing the timing for responses would increase response rate;
- whether the reduction in the number of academic leaders would have any impact on celebrating the excellence revealed in student surveys;
- that celebrating and improving excellence in teaching was important in any leadership structure;
- the different needs for students in the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, work to develop additional appendices for different pedagogies, and whether it was better to have those pieces in the policy itself or in the procedures and appendices; and
- whether providing class time was mandatory or merely suggested.

A member suggested that the procedure should indicate that the instructor was to leave the room when giving class time for students to complete the evaluation, and that the free text section should be marked as optional. J Nychka agreed to update those changes in the documents.

A member asked for clarification on why the survey questions were not changing. J Nychka explained that the policy suite approval would provide the framework which would allow the pilot study and validation of the new survey questions. The Chair noted that GFC would approve the initial suite of new survey questions after they had been validated.

A member made a motion from the floor to postpone the approval of the policy suite. She expressed that the survey questions were crucial to the proposal and that the current questions were inherently discriminatory. She further remarked that GFC should not approve the policy suite until they were provided with a rationale for how bias would be mitigated in student evaluation questions.

W Rodgers and J Nychka responded that the new policy framework would drive the development of the questions and address bias, and that postponing the item would mean that no progress was made.

The motion to postpone was put to a vote and defeated.

The discussion on the main motions continued and included:

- an expression of support for information in the policy suite about other ways to evaluate teaching; and
- expressions of support for the involvement of CRAME in the development of the questions and work to mitigate bias.

A member voiced an objection to the motions because of the inherent bias in student survey results and because the results were used for employment decisions at the university. She explained that many studies of

student surveys had identified bias against people of colour, women, and those from other marginalized groups, and that more work was needed before this was brought to a vote. She noted that GFC had not been apprised of the studies on this topic and that no social scientist could believe that these changes were sufficient and agree with the approval of this policy suite. She further noted that GFC should not vote to recommend approval of this policy suite because it would indicate that they approve of the university having a discriminatory practice and that if the motion did pass she would bring a motion to suspend the use of the current questions.

Motion: Sale/Pegg

Motion from the floor:

THAT consideration of the motions be postponed until the following events have occurred:

1. GFC has received the questions that have been “piloted” for the proposed new Student Perspectives on Teaching surveys, and has had the opportunity to discuss and approve the questions.

and

2. GFC has been provided with supporting rationale for the proposition that the new policy and procedure will mitigate the bias inherent in student opinion surveys. As GFC’s motion of 30 May 2016 declared that the “ultimate objective” of a “review of the University of Alberta’s existing Universal Student Ratings of Instructions (USRIs) and their use for assessment and evaluation of teaching” will be to provide tools that use “qualitative and quantitative criteria that are fair, equitable, non-discriminatory and meaningful across disciplines.”

DEFEATED

Motion: Dixon/Tupper

THAT the General Faculties Council, as recommended by the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment, recommend that the Board of Governors approve the proposed UAPPOL Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy Suite, as set forth in Attachments 1, 2 and 3, as amended, to take effect July 1, 2022.

CARRIED

Motion: Dixon/Tupper

THAT the General Faculties Council, as recommended by the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment, rescind GFC Policy 111 pending final approval of the UAPPOL Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy suite, and to take effect July 1, 2022.

CARRIED

7. Faculty of Education Restructuring

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Jennifer Tupper, Dean, Faculty of Education; Lynn McGarvey, Vice-Dean, Faculty of Education

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee to seek approval of the change to a non-departmentalized structure of the Faculty of Education.

Discussion:

The Chair acknowledged the extensive consultation on the proposal as well as the contributions of the GFC Academic Planning Committee and the GFC Executive Committee.

L McGarvey gave a brief presentation on the proposed non-departmentalized structure for the Faculty of Education. She noted that there would be no changes to the programs offered at this time and spoke about the consultation process, the vision which reflects the Cree concept of *mâmahowkamâtowin* (working cooperatively and collectively to serve our students), and the ongoing work of the Governance, Leadership, and Administration Working Groups.

J Tupper observed that the process was a journey and there was more work to be done, but these changes would allow the Faculty to redeploy their resources to support the core missions of teaching and research.

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

- that a reorganization as defined in article A10 of the Academic Faculty Schedule of the Collective Agreement with the Association of the Academic Staff of the University of Alberta (AASUA) was not part of the restructuring proposal;
- the number of academic staff in each of the current units and how they would be organized in the new structure;
- the potential for a non-departmentalized Faculty to enhance transdisciplinarity and collegiality;
- misgivings with university restructuring that appeared to be based on corporate restructuring;
- the importance of retaining subject matter expertise in evaluation, delivery of programming, and assignment of teaching;
- the work of the Leadership Working Group to reimagine the leadership structure and retain the connection to that expertise; and
- an expression of pride at how many members of the Faculty of Education had engaged with the opportunity to create and make their processes more inclusive.

A member expressed opposition to the motion and the restructuring process noting that the vote at Education Faculty Council was very close which showed that the Faculty was divided on the matter and that more work needed to be done.

In response to a question about how much money would be saved with the restructuring, J Tupper replied that the annual budget for the Faculty was eight million dollars less than when she began her appointment as Dean in 2017.

THAT the General Faculties Council recommend that the Board of Governors approve the proposal for a non-departmentalized structure for the Faculty of Education, to take effect July 1, 2022.

CARRIED

8. Notice of Motion – Changes to Composition of General Faculties Council (GFC) and to the Reapportionment Procedure

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): J Nelson Amaral, Professor and Elected Faculty Member of GFC

Purpose of the Proposal: At the January 31, 2022 meeting, a member made a Notice of Motion as set out in 8.7 of the GFC Meeting Procedural Rules (MPR) for debate at the next meeting of GFC. GFC Executive Committee is asked to recommend on a motion to change the composition of General Faculties Council by adding 8 additional appointed elected faculty and 8 elected student members as set out in Section 25 of the Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA) for a total of 173 members.

Discussion:

JN Amaral indicated that the four appointed members of senior administration should be balanced out by an additional eight elected faculty members and eight elected student members and that any time GFC chose to add more members of senior administration, additional elected faculty and students should be added as well.

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

- that non-academic staff were a large number on campus but there were only two representatives on GFC and there should be more;
- whether the size of the Council Chambers should factor in to the decision about the size of GFC;

- that GFC was already quite large and that it was important to consider membership as a holistic item when the terms of reference were reviewed in the fall;
- that the students and faculty had recently lost seats on GFC through reapportionment;
- that with such a large body it was already difficult for members to be engaged;
- that the spirit of the motion was to balance administration but administration was already a small percentage and this change would not have that much of an impact;
- that this was a modest change and that the composition could still be considered further;
- the importance of student involvement and engagement with GFC;
- that there were more things about the GFC terms of reference and composition that needed to be considered and that doing it this way was not the answer;
- that it was important to think about appropriate representation across the university;
- that our university's academic governing body was unique with the large number of student seats;
- an opinion that students and administration have one voice that is hostile to faculty;
- an observation that it was troubling that members could not disagree without accusations of bad faith;
- that it could be quite intimidating for student members to speak up in GFC meetings; and
- that the GFC terms of reference were scheduled for review in fall 2023.

A member proposed an amendment to add an additional two non-academic staff members to the composition of GFC.

The Chair reminded members that the GFC terms of reference were scheduled for review in the fall. A member made a point of order that the Chair should not remind members of this.

The motion was put to a vote and carried.

The discussion continued to include:

- a member noted that he was in favour of the original motion but not of the amended motion;
- that adding to the membership of GFC should be discussed more before action is taken;
- a clarification question about reapportionment and whether it would need to be done again; and
- confirmation that reapportionment was done every three years and did not affect the number of appointed members of GFC.

Motion: Foster/Boyd

Motion from the floor:

Proposed amendment to add an additional 2 non-academic staff members, elected by the Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA), to the composition of GFC.

CARRIED

Motion: Dixon/Tupper

THAT the General Faculties Council approve changes to the GFC composition as set out in attachment 1, effective April 1, 2022.

DEFEATED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

9 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:

A member raised a point of order that the Meeting Procedural Rules specified that GFC's question period must be 30 minutes in length. The Chair replied that GFC could extend the meeting if they wished.

A member made a motion from the floor to extend the meeting for an additional 15 minutes. The motion carried.

A member asked about the baseline was for leadership ratios. Provost and Vice-President (Academic) Steven Dew replied that they were looking at making things more proportional to the set of drivers and activities at the Faculty.

A member asked how the university would review the Dean selection process. S. Dew replied that the university would regularly review its ongoing efforts to increase equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).

A member noted that an equity-deserving candidate was not chosen as the new Dean of the Faculty of Arts and that 38 members of the Faculty wrote to the Provost to ask about that decision. She asked if the Provost would agree to a public description of the selection committee training and to changing policy to ensure that this could not happen again. She also asked how the Scarborough Charter factored in to this situation. S Dew replied that equity matters were considered and the selection committee received formal instruction by the Senior Advisor, Equity and Human Rights. He also noted that the Scarborough principles should inform everything across these processes.

A member asked about the policy in the Faculty of Engineering which allowed faculty members to vote in favour or against a Dean's appointment. S Dew replied that policy had probably been in place since the 1980s and that while it did allow for some clarity on where the faculty was at, it also undermined the work of the selection committee.

Motion: Flaman/Amaral

Motion from the floor:

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

CARRIED

INFORMATION REPORTS

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

10. Report of the GFC Executive Committee
- Update on the Executive Subcommittee on Governance and Procedural Oversight (GPO)
11. Report of the GFC Academic Planning Committee
12. Report of the GFC Programs Committee
13. GFC Nominations and Elections
- Anticipated Vacancies
14. Information Items:
 - A. Report on Metrics
 - B. Annual Report on Undergraduate Enrolment 2021-22
 - C. COVID-19 Governance Decision Tracker

- D. Path Forward for the Review of the GFC Guiding Documents
- E. College Strategic Plans
- F. Update on the Recommendations of the Committee of the Whole

CLOSING SESSION

15. Adjournment
 - Next Meeting of General Faculties Council: March 21, 2022

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