



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council
Academic Planning Committee
Approved Open Session Minutes

Wednesday, April 10, 2013
Room 2-31, South Academic Building
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Voting Members:

Martin Ferguson-Pell	Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Acting Chair, GFC Academic Planning Committee
Renee Elio (Delegate)	Vice-President (Research)
Phyllis Clark	Vice-President (Finance and Administration)
Colten Yamagishi	President, Students' Union
Deanna Williamson	Academic Staff Member, Member of GFC
Wendy Rodgers	Academic Staff Member, Member of GFC
Joanna Harrington	Academic Staff Member, Member of GFC
Christina Rinaldi	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Loren Kline	Academic Staff Member-at-large
Geeta Sehgal	NASA Member at-large
Larry Prochner	Department Chair at-large

Non-Voting Members:

Gerry Kendal	Vice-Provost and University Registrar
Ed Blackburn	Member of the GFC Executive Committee
Bill Connor	Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction)

Presenter(s):

Phyllis Clark	Vice-President (Finance and Administration)
Martin Ferguson-Pell	Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Acting Chair, GFC Academic Planning Committee

Staff:

Garry Bodnar	Coordinator, GFC Academic Planning Committee
Andrea Patrick	Scribe

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Kline/Rodgers

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of March 27, 2013

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Sehgal/Harrington

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve the Minutes of March 27, 2013.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Acting Chair

Dr Ferguson-Pell commented on a number of relevant items to members.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. University of Alberta Budget – Update

There were no documents.

Presenters: Martin Ferguson-Pell, Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic); Phyllis Clark, Vice-President (Finance and Administration)

Purpose of the Discussion: For information.

Discussion:

Dr Ferguson-Pell noted that Administration will be tackling the institutional implications of the recent Provincial Budget in two phases. The first will include disseminating individually-tailored budget letters to each Faculty which will (in part) address the 2013-2014 budget revisions; the second phase, which at this time is less defined, involves several factors aimed at fostering overall structural stability.

Regarding the first phase, Dr Ferguson-Pell noted that the Provincial Government has indicated that temporary institutional deficits will be allowed, which also hinges on the Board of Governors' approval of the revised University budget.

Regarding phase two, Dr Ferguson-Pell reported that the broad aim of the strategy includes long-term stability for the academy, adding that Administration's response to the Provincial Budget has seemed slow but actually represents a calculated pace of decision-making to ensure that all decisions are made appropriately and strategically. He stated that there is also hope that the 2014-2015 Provincial Budget may address some of the funding gaps incurred by the 2013-2014 Provincial Budget.

During the ensuing discussion, members expressed several comments in relation to this item, including, but not limited to: transferability agreements between Alberta post-secondary institutions should be easier to comprehend; and students would prefer a digitized process to make transferability easier.

5. Government of Alberta's 'Letter of Expectation' for the University of Alberta

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Martin Ferguson-Pell, Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Purpose of the Discussion: For information.

Discussion:

Dr Ferguson-Pell reported that the University's approach to the 'Letter of Expectation' will be determined by whatever clarification is achieved at the meeting held between Minister Lukaszuk, President Indira Samarasekera, and the Presidents of the other Alberta post-secondary institutions scheduled for April 11, 2013—he outlined the agenda for that meeting to members. Dr Ferguson-Pell noted that the meeting will include time for discussion amongst all attendees followed, in turn, by a facilitated group meeting format. He reported that one of the main focuses of the meeting will be Campus Alberta, and Dr Samarasekera has been asked, as have the other Presidents for their own institutions, to provide a list of the University of Alberta's top three areas of strength and uniqueness within the Campus Alberta framework. He stated that greater clarity is required around issues such as program closures and suspensions as well as duplication, and he added that the University of Alberta will attempt to foster ongoing dialogue with the Ministry of Enterprise and Advanced Education (EAE) about some of these issues to ensure that there is proper representation and collaboration with regard to future planning.

Dr Ferguson-Pell reported that a group consisting of Alberta's post-secondary Presidents and Board Chairs will be attempting to meet more frequently as a result of the Ministry's emphasis on Campus Alberta. He noted that there are concerns that student as well as academic representation is missing from that group.

Members expressed comments and questions in relation to this item, including, but not limited to: autonomy may be lost in the proposed Campus Alberta infrastructure; none of the world's leading research-intensive institutions work within a highly-consolidated framework; widespread collaboration with other post-secondary institutions may challenge successful standard procedures and practices at the University of Alberta; new Campus Alberta measures may disadvantage student mobility and satisfaction; universities and colleges are inherently different from each other and consolidating their experiences pushes them to become indistinguishable; a common first year for all undergraduate students was trialed unsuccessfully at the University of Calgary; ushering in improvements at the University of Alberta will be difficult if exact problems are not properly and specifically identified at the outset; there is a widespread lack of awareness about how transferability works (and works well) in relation to degree program credit in this province; there needs to be more clarity about the existing six-sector model for post-secondary education in the Province of Alberta, as currently enshrined in the Alberta *Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA)*; and clarification on how the 'Letter of Expectation' relates to the University's Board-approved Roles and Mandates document.

Dr Ferguson-Pell stated that an amended 'Letter of Expectation', which will reflect institution-specific revisions, will be routed through the proper governance committees, culminating with Board of Governors' approval.

Mr Bodnar clarified the date of the Board of Governors' June, 2013 meeting.

6. Question Period

There were no questions.

INFORMATION REPORTS

7. Items Approved by the GFC Academic Planning Committee by E-Mail Ballots

There were no items.

8. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

9. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:15 pm.