



General Faculties Council  
Academic Planning Committee  
Approved Open Session Minutes

Wednesday, June 12, 2013  
Room 2-31, South Academic Building  
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

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**ATTENDEES:**

Voting Members:

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Martin Ferguson-Pell        | Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Acting Chair, GFC<br>Academic Planning Committee |
| Philip Stack<br>(Delegate)  | Vice-President (Finance and Administration)   |
| Dustin Chelen<br>(Delegate) | President, Students' Union  |
| Megha Bajaj<br>(Delegate)   | President, Graduate Students' Association   |
| Deanna Williamson           | Academic Staff Member, Member of GFC  |
| Wendy Rodgers               | 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  |

Non-Voting Members:

|              |                                       |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| Gerry Kendal | Vice-Provost and University Registrar |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|

Presenter(s):

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Philip Stack         | Associate Vice-President (Risk Management Services)   |
| Martin Ferguson-Pell | Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Acting Chair, GFC<br>Academic Planning Committee |
| Deborah Gougeon      | Assistant Registrar (Admissions), Office of the Registrar   |
| Pat Schultz          | Associate Registrar (Enrolment Management), Office of the Registrar                               |
| Mazi Shirvani        | Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research                                   |
| Lihong Yang          | Assistant Registrar (International Admissions), Office of the Registrar                           |

Staff:

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Marion Haggarty-France | University Secretary and Acting Coordinator, GFC Academic Planning<br>Committee |
| Andrea Patrick         | Scribe  |

## **OPENING SESSION**

### 1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Kline/Chelen

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve the Agenda.

**CARRIED**

### 2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of May 22, 2013

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Williamson/Kline

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve the Minutes of May 22, 2013.

**CARRIED**

### 3. Comments from the Acting Chair

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

A member enquired about information regarding job losses on the Change@UAlberta website.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### 4. Final Grade 11/Grade 12 Courses Required for Early Offers of Admission – Proposal from the Office of the Registrar

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenters:* Pat Schultz, Associate Registrar (Enrolment Management), Office of the Registrar; Lihong Yang, Assistant Registrar (International Admissions), Office of the Registrar; Deborah Gougeon, Assistant Registrar (Admissions), Office of the Registrar

*Purpose of the Proposal:* To accept Final Grade 11/Grade 12 courses for Early Admission to the University of Alberta.

*Discussion:*

Ms Schultz briefed members on the history of the proposal, adding that the current "Early Admission" guidelines have resulted in large numbers of applicants being turned away after final Grade 12 grades are available. She noted that this practice has had a negative impact on those students as well as on enrolment planning across Faculties. She reported that in 2012, 615 students were refused at the final admission stage and that these numbers are increasing annually.

Ms Gougeon stated that the current practice includes reporting self-declared grades, which are not validated officially, and that the proposal addresses this by requesting all Grade 12 courses taken (with grades assigned) and those to be taken, as well as Grade 11 courses and final grades, if Grade 12 grades

are not available. She noted that the current practice does not provide a good indicator of success, and the proposal provides a better foundation for early admission practices. She stated that preliminary data suggests that Grade 11 final grades are very good predictors for successful early admission.

Members expressed several comments and questions in relation to this proposal, including, but not limited to: clarification about how admission averages might be impacted; whether early admission averages can be higher than final admission averages; and clarification about average grade distribution.

Motion: Sehgal/Williamson

THAT GFC Academic Planning Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council (GFC), the proposed changes to Section 13.5.1 (Early Offers of Admission) of the University Calendar, as submitted by the Office of the Registrar and as set forth in Attachment 1, to be effective for Fall 2014 and for inclusion in the 2014-2015 Calendar.

**CARRIED**

5. Proposal from the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) for the Addition of a Program Requirements Milestone for Doctoral Students

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter:* Mazi Shirvani, Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

*Purpose of the Proposal:* This proposal would require doctoral students to complete all program requirements, other than the thesis, within the first three years of a doctoral program. It would replace the current “normally within two years” rule for candidacy exams, and extend to also cover preliminary examinations and comprehensive examinations. Three departments and the School of Dentistry (with respect to one of Dentistry’s three doctoral programs) have asked to be exempt from the proposed three-year rule. The adoption of a three-year rule for program requirements, working in tandem with the existing six-year rule for completion, also enhances transparency of expectations and planning for doctoral students.

*Discussion:*

Dr Shirvani briefed members on the history of the proposal, noting that it contains requirements for doctoral students to complete all program requirements, with the exception of the thesis, within the first three years of a doctoral program. He reported that many other Canadian post-secondary institutions already have in place similar requirements. He noted that there was extensive consultation with regard to the issue of students who may fail to meet the new time limits. He stated that the existing six-year rule, as well the option for an extension, will remain within institutional policy.

He stated that the other revisions within the proposal are mostly “house-keeping” changes aimed towards language and clarity within Section 204.2 of the University Calendar. He reported that several programs have requested an exemption to these revisions including the Department of Educational Psychology, the Department of English and Film Studies, the Department of Philosophy, and the Department of Dentistry.

A member enquired about possible methods for ensuring that students are making progress towards the completion of their coursework.

Motion: Kline/Williamson

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council (GFC), the proposed changes to Sections 204.2 and 203.15 of the University Calendar concerning 'Doctoral Degrees' and 'Program Extensions', as submitted by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) with the recommendation of FGSR Council and as set forth in Attachment 1 (with relevant text highlighted in yellow), to take effect in 2014-2015.

**CARRIED**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### 6. Budget and Related Issues - Update

There were no documents.

*Presenters:* Martin Ferguson-Pell, Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic); Philip Stack, Associate Vice-President (Risk Management Services)

*Purpose of the Proposal:* For information and discussion.

#### *Discussion:*

Having not done so at the May 22, 2013 GFC APC meeting, Mr Stack read aloud a statement to members officially clarifying the freeze of the 2013-2014 tuition rate by the Provincial Government: "On April 18, 2013 the Provincial Government announced the tuition rate for 2013-14 would be frozen. I am bringing the Government's direction to the Board who voted to increase tuition at its December 2012 Board meeting. To date, the University of Alberta has not received formal notification regarding the freeze. However, the direction has been set by the Government and now needs to be implemented by the University. The Government has pledged to cover the annual 2.15% tuition increase tied to the annual rate of inflation for the upcoming academic year."

Mr Stack reported that, subsequent to the issuing of this statement, which was read aloud at the University of Alberta Board of Governors' meeting of May 10, 2013, a letter was received by the University from the Government confirming that \$3.9 million in one-time funding would be provided to off-set the tuition rate freeze, but he emphasized that it is one-time funding and that if the institution did not receive it, and in the absence of being able to raise tuition, there would be a further budget shortfall.

Mr Stack then updated members on the 2013-2014 institutional budget, noting that it is in the process of being finalized. He stated that if the Ministry of Enterprise and Advanced Education (EAE) will not accept the budget plan within the Comprehensive Institutional Plan (CIP), the University of Alberta will have to redraft the entire budget. He noted that based on recent meetings with the Ministry of EAE, there is an acceptable level of confidence that they will approve the revised budget plan, as presented.

Members expressed a number of comments and questions in relation to this item, including, but not limited to: clarification about the impact of the budget on international students in terms of tuition; and clarification about the specific dollar amount changes to the budget.

### 7. Question Period

A member enquired about the approach to drafting the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the University of Alberta and the Provincial Government, specifically in terms of how it relates to the existing Board-approved Mandate of the University of Alberta as well as to the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*

(PSLA); another member enquired about how other post-secondary institutions within Alberta might approach international student tuition in light of current budget concerns.

### **INFORMATION REPORTS**

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

There were no items.

9. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

### **CLOSING SESSION**

10. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 2:55 pm.