



# UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

## UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council  
Academic Planning Committee  
Approved Open Session Minutes

Wednesday, September 23, 2020  
Zoom Virtual Meeting  
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

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### **ATTENDEES:**

Steven Dew  
Joel Agarwal  
Chris Andersen  
Amlan Bose  
Walter Dixon  
Shannon Erichsen  
Jelena Holovati

Gitta Kulczycki  
Susanne Luhmann  
Pirkko Markula  
Melissa Padfield  
Jerine Pegg  
Susan Sommerfeldt  
Kisha Supernant  
Marc Waddingham

Sheena Wilson  
Ding Xu  
Yan Yuan  
*non-voting:*  
Brad Hamdon  
Kate Peters

Staff:  
Heather Richholt, Scribe

### **OPENING SESSION**

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair of GFC Academic Planning Committee (APC)

Motion: Bose/Padfield

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve Agenda.

**CARRIED**

2. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

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

*Discussion:*

The Chair noted that this was the final APC meeting for Vice-President (Finance and Administration) Gitta Kulczycki and acknowledged her significant contributions to the University over the last four years. He further noted that Martin Coutts would serve as interim until Todd Gilchrist would take up the role on October 26.

The Chair mentioned the outbreak of COVID-19 in the St. Joseph's College Residence and said that the University was working with Alberta Health Services to deal with the situation.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of September 9, 2020

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

*Discussion:*

The Chair noted that the closed session minutes would be considered for approval in a closed session at the end of the meeting.

Motion: Bose/Ericksen

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve the Open Session Minutes of September 9, 2020.

**CARRIED**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### 4. Academic Restructuring

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

*Purpose of the Proposal:* To discuss and receive feedback on the contents of the Interim Report of the Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG).

*Discussion:*

The Chair gave a brief presentation on the interim report of the ARWG and went over the rough timeline for consultation and approval, the emphasis on decoupling administrative and academic functions, as well as the three scenarios in the recommendations. He asked members for their feedback on the report as well as advice on how to proceed with the discussion at full GFC.

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

- clarification on why, in scenario B, Faculties would remain Faculties and what "Faculty status" meant for each unit;
- how cost savings could be realized by removing academics from leadership roles;
- clarification on why the realization of academic benefits was clear for scenario B but not for scenario C;
- the expectation that GFC would be charged on the subject of academic restructuring and the importance of not limiting or shutting down debate;
- that this was only the beginning of the discussions on these matters and that there would be more opportunity for GFC and for the university community to ask questions and offer feedback;
- request for a visualization of how the savings would be realized;
- the potential to include case studies and qualitative data regarding student and staff satisfaction at universities where similar restructuring had been undertaken;
- that there was no territorial acknowledgement in the report;
- the importance of including indigeneity and reconciliation specifically, not just including it under the heading of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI);
- whether directors of Centres and Institutes were included in this plan and a note that some were funded by outside donors or endowments;
- where and how the decisions would be made on how many Department and Faculty leaders were needed;
- how the organizational chart would look for administrative and academic leadership;
- why more efficient, larger Faculties were also expected to reorganize;
- concerns about academic and program consequences for small Departments;
- that status and independence was greater for disciplines with administrative units built around them;

- whether the three proposed scenarios were the only possible options;
- that the ARWG was open to working with feedback and consultation to shape what would eventually come forward for approval;
- how the academic leadership structure could be improved to make it more focused on strategy and policy with support teams to take care of transactional duties;
- how Faculty level academic advising would fit into the proposed scenarios;
- how Advancement and donor funds would be handled post restructuring;
- how some student services, including some general advising, could be centralized as a part of the Service Excellence Transformation (SET) initiative but that some more complex and program specific advising should be handled at the Department level;
- questions about some of the proposed groupings of Faculties and alternative suggestions which would make more sense for discipline alignment;
- whether being forced to restructure so quickly removed the ability to find better and more innovative solutions;
- how central units like University of Alberta International would be affected and how they would interact with division leadership;
- that work on Department models would happen later in the process;
- how Faculty Evaluation Committees would work in the proposed scenarios; and
- concern that these scenarios would add a layer of administration and that the result would be a greater burden on faculty members but with less compensation and recognition.

**The committee moved into closed session to approve the closed session minutes of September 9, 2020.**

**The committee came out of closed session having decided to post the approved minutes from the closed session of September 9, 2020 as public information.**

5. Budget Update (no documents)

*Presenter(s):* Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair of APC; Gitta Kulczycki, Vice-President (Finance and Administration)

*Discussion:*

The Chair noted that there were no changes to report at present.

Ms Kulzycki remarked that the government was expected to release a mini-budget in November but that they were not sure of any details yet.

6. Question Period

There were no questions.

**INFORMATION REPORTS**

7. Items Approved by GFC Academic Planning Committee by email 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 4:13 p.m.