



General Faculties Council
Academic Standards Committee
Minutes

Thursday, May 19, 2011
3-15 University Hall
9:00 am – 12:00 pm

ATTENDEES:

Elaine Geddes – Acting Chair (delegate), Ada Schmude (delegate), Rory Tighe (delegate), Vikki Northrup (delegate), Jason MacLean (delegate), William Street (delegate), Jim Bohun (delegate), Harry Prest (delegate), Ken Porteous (delegate), Walter Archer (delegate), John Law (delegate), Joanne Olson (delegate), Pierre Baudin (delegate), Lory Laing (delegate), Dave Magee (delegate), Brenda Leskiw (delegate), Tarek el-Bialy, Matthew Li, Sharla King, Marlene Lewis – Coordinator, Deborah Holloway – Scribe

PRESENTERS AND GUESTS:

Kathleen Brough, Portfolio Initiatives Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Donna Cave, Acting Director, University Health Centre
Bill Connor, Special Advisor to the Provost
Pat Dalton, Associate Registrar and Director of Enrolment and Member of GFC ASC
Barbara Dussault, Director of Graduate Services, Faculty of Nursing
Elaine Geddes, Associate Dean, Faculty of Business and Acting Chair, GFC ASC
Deb Gougeon, Assistant Registrar, Admissions
Joanna Harrington, Associate Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research and Delegate for René Poliquin, Member of GFC ASC
Florence Myrick, Associate Dean, Faculty of Nursing
Ken Porteous, Associate Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Member of GFC ASC
Ada Schmude, Associate Registrar and Director of Records and Member of GFC ASC
Anna Vocioni, Assistant Registrar, Examinations and Timetabling
Lihong Yang, Assistant Registrar, International Admissions

OSBERVER:

Joni Larsen, Office of the Registrar and Student Awards

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Magee/Baudin

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve the Agenda as presented.
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CARRIED

2. Approval of the Regular Session Minutes of April 15, 2011

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Leskiw/Prest

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve the Minutes of April 15, 2011.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Acting Chair

The Acting Chair provided comments of interest to members. She welcomed Matthew Li to his first meeting of GFC ASC, and, as the meeting marks his last as a member of GFC ASC, acknowledged and thanked Dr Magee for his service on the Committee.

ACTION ITEMS

4. The Following Proposal(s) are Deemed Minor/Editorial (GFC ASC's Terms of Reference (Mandate) (3.A.i and iii)) by the Vice-Provost (Academic Programs) and Chair, GFC ASC and are APPROVED UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY FROM GFC IN A SINGLE OMNIBUS MOTION.

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Elaine Geddes, Associate Dean, Faculty of Business and Acting Chair, GFC ASC

4A. Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Admissions/Transfer Requirements for Graduate Programming

Dr Harrington noted that a reference to "iBT" would be changed to "TOEFL score of 98 (internet-based) for consistency with other calendar references.

4B. Office of the Registrar and Student Awards Transfer Course Approvals for May, 2011

Discussion:

Omnibus Motion: Magee/Olson

THAT the Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from GFC, the above-noted editorial changes to academic standing/graduation/promotions, admission/transfer requirements, and changes to the University Calendar for Items 4A – 4B, as amended.

CARRIED

5. Faculties of Nursing and Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) (New) Embedded Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Nursing Education

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Joanna Harrington, Associate Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) and delegate for René Poliquin, member of GFC ASC SOS; Florence Myrick, Associate Dean, Faculty of Nursing; and Barbara Dussault, Director of Graduate Services, Faculty of Nursing

Purpose of the Proposal: [excerpt from the Outline of Issue] Nursing education requires educators who not only possess nursing knowledge and who are proficient in clinical practice and skill but who are also knowledgeable about educational theory and informed about the process of teaching and learning. The rationale for the introduction of the embedded Graduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Nursing Education is to address a need for formal teacher preparation in nursing education. The completion of this certificate would thus reflect the acquisition of the relevant knowledge and skills required to teach in the discipline of nursing. At a glance, this certificate would allow for instant recognition of formal preparation in teaching and learning in nursing education.

Discussion:

Dr Harrington introduced the item, noting that the proposal had received the support of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council. Dr Myrick described the elements of the proposal.

During the ensuing discussion, the presenters addressed questions and comments from members regarding the following matters: whether students outside of the Nursing program would be eligible; and whether new embedded certificates could be developed for other Faculties in the Health Sciences.

Motion: Harrington/Magee

That the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the embedded certificate in Teaching and Learning in Nursing Education, as submitted by the Faculties of Nursing and Graduate Studies and Research and as set out in Attachment 1 of the documentation, for implementation in 2011-2012.

CARRIED

6. Office of the Registrar and Student Awards and the Expansion of University of Alberta Bridging Program

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Ada Schmude, Associate Registrar and Director of Records and member of GFC ASC; Lihong Yang, Assistant Registrar, International Admissions; and Bill Connor, Special Advisor to the Provost

Purpose of the Proposal: To expand the University of Alberta Bridging Program to include a Stage 1 and Stage 2, which will provide students an option to ladder from the first to the second.

Discussion:

Dr Connor introduced the item, noting that both university and private foundation programs in Canada admit students with a lower level of language proficiency than our established Bridging Program so, to remain competitive, a new level of language training that will prepare otherwise qualified students to enter the Bridging Program is proposed. He stressed that the proposed requirements pose no risk to the University's academic standards, adding that the GFC ASC Subcommittee on Standards had reviewed the proposal at its meeting of May 5, 2011.

During the ensuing discussion, the presenters addressed questions and comments from members regarding the following matters: clarity was sought regarding the form of Academic support that would be offered in Stage 3; and whether the number of instructional hours would remain unchanged.

Motion: Schmude/Baudin

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee recommend to the GFC Academic Planning Committee, the expansion of the University of Alberta Bridging Program to include a Stage 1, with newly defined admission requirements, and the renaming of the current Bridging Program to the University of Alberta Bridging Program Stage 2, as submitted by the Office of the Registrar and Student Awards and as set out in Attachment 1 of the documentation, to take effect upon approval and for publication in the 2012-13 University Calendar.

CARRIED

7. Recording Lectures and Changes to Section 61.3 (Marking and Grading Guidelines) of the GFC Policy Manual and Section 23.4 (Evaluation Procedures and Grading System) of the University Calendar

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Kathleen Brough, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Purpose of the Proposal: The addition of a required statement in course outlines detailing the requirement for permission from an instructor in order to create an audio or video recording of a lecture.

Discussion:

Ms Brough presented the item, noting the extensive consultative route. She reported that the implement plan includes the following three components:

- Stating the rule in the *Calendar*
- Development of resources that would include a website, frequently asked questions, and scenario-based examples
- Compliance: the Campus Law Review Committee will begin to address this component in the Fall of 2011.

During the ensuing discussion, the presenter addressed questions and comments from members regarding the following matters: whether the proposal is for early implementation; concern regarding permission provided by an instructor to record might result in other students, who have not provided permission, being recorded; clarity was sought regarding the phrase “used only for personal study;” and a note that “recording” and “distributing” are discrete activities.

Motion: Prest/Harrington

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee recommend to the GFC Executive Committee Changes to Section 61.3 (Marking and Grading Guidelines) of the GFC Policy Manual and Section 23.4 (Evaluation Procedures and Grading System) of the University Calendar, as submitted by the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Information Technology) and as set out in Attachment 1 of the documentation, to be effective upon approval.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

8. Review of Missed Term Work and Absence from Exams Policies

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Ada Schmude, Associate Registrar, Director of Records; Anna Vocioni, Assistant Registrar,

Examinations and Timetabling; and Donna Cave, Acting Director, University Health Centre

Purpose of the Proposal: To discuss issues and questions regarding missed term work and absence from exam policies raised during and subsequent to the November, 2010 GFC ASC meeting including.

Discussion:

The Acting Chair introduced the item by noting that at the November 19, 2010 of GFC ASC members requested that the *content* of missed term work and absence from examinations policies be revisited by the Committee. Issues members identified for potential discussion included defining “term work” and “incapacitating illness” more precisely, exploring the adequacy of existing Policy around cancellation of papers when a student becomes ill while writing an exam and the advantages and disadvantages of increased consistency between Faculties as to how each deals with deferred examinations. Therefore, this issue was before members for discussion purposes.

Ms Vocioni provided details regarding the document before members entitled “Deferred Processing Statistics for Registered Students,” noting that deferrals had increased by 43 percent across the institution over the past two years, although increase rates varied by Faculty.

During the ensuing discussion, the presenter addressed questions and comments from members regarding the following matters: that the document before members addresses deferred final examinations but does not capture other forms of term work deferred; although in some Faculties the increase in deferrals is modest, the impact is nevertheless serious as examinations are not simple to replicate; that students deferring without genuine case may receive an unfair advantage over other students in the program with respect to grading; that “incapacitating illness” requires a definition; whether the language in the Policy regarding the timing to make an application for an excused absence is clear; the pros and cons of recording deferrals on a University’s transcript.

Ms Cave provided an update regarding the impact on the University Health Centre following the changes to the sick note policy made in Fall, 2009 and reported that while requests for sick notes were greatly reduced, many students persist in seeking them for “security” purposes. She also noted that many Teaching Assistants continue to request sick notes. Ms Cave went on to report the results of a recent study undertaken via the National College Health Assessment, a research survey designed to assist institutions in collecting precise data about their students’ health habits, behaviors, and perceptions. Of note, 55 percent of University of Alberta respondents identified the impact of health and wellness issues on their academic success as being either “traumatic” or “very difficult to handle.” Nearly 40 percent listed stress as the primary health and wellness issue. She reported that despite increasing the number of counselors available to University of Alberta students, the demand continues to increase, with lengthy waiting lists and delayed entry into the counseling program. Ms Cave suggested that additional investments in the health and wellness program would be beneficial and suggested that a policy be developed that would employ the demand for sick notes by an individual student as triggering a protocol to ensure the student is offered appropriate assistance.

During the ensuing discussion, the presenter addressed questions and comments from members regarding the following matters: that members are seeing an increase in the number of illegitimate requests for deferral; that international students experience relatively more stress than domestic students; that some students who are ill are denied deferrals; that some Faculties report an increase in statutory declarations which has work load implications; and a concern that statutory declarations serve little purpose as there are no repercussions for false declarations.

The Acting Chair noted that a return to requiring sick notes is not contemplated; however, there is a need

to balance the needs of those students who genuinely require a deferral while also providing disincentives to those who do not. A comparison of our practices with those of our peers would be helpful. She suggested that this item return to GFC ASC in the future.

9. Student Cancellation of an Exam in Progress

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Ken Porteous, Associate Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Member of GFC ASC; and Ada Schmude, Associate Registrar & Director of Records

Purpose of the Proposal: To adjust the regulations within the University Calendar to clarify the terms under which a student may cancel an exam once it is in progress and to ensure those regulations are aligned with those surrounding the time frame in which students are permitted to leave the examination room.

Discussion:

Dr Porteous introduced the item, noting the regulations do not articulate the point in an examination beyond which a student may not cancel the exam.

During the ensuing discussion, the presenters addressed questions and comments from members regarding the following matters: whether the decision to cancel an examination should be at the discretion of the instructor or the student's choice; and whether there should be differentiation between mid-term and final examinations.

The Acting Chair noted student members' concern regarding the issue of who should have the authority to cancel an exam, and requested that they consult with their constituencies prior to the item returning to GFC ASC.

10. Revisions to the Glossary in the University Calendar

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Pat Dalton, Associate Registrar & Director of Enrolment Management; and Deborah Gougeon, Assistant Registrar, Admissions

Purpose of the Proposal: To highlight changes that will be made to the Glossary of the University Calendar (Section 24) for publication in the 2012-13 edition.

Discussion:

Ms Gougeon presented the item, noting that need for common terminology and definitions across the institution, with the Glossary in the *Calendar* serving as the foundation. The Registrar's Office examined the Glossaries at peer institutions and vetted many of the terms and definitions with administrative departments and Faculties. The Acting Chair noted that concern had been expressed that the list included policy, raising the issue of whether these items would be included as informational or whether they would be seen to carry the weight of policy.

Members provided the presenters with feedback that included questions about specific definitions, editorial comments, and concluded by advising that the process be slowed down to ensure consistency and accuracy.

11. External Programs for Review and Programs in Progress on Campus: Standing Item

Presenters: Kathleen Brough, Portfolio Initiatives Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic); and Elaine Geddes, Associate Dean, Faculty of Business and Acting Chair, GFC ASC

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:

Ms Brough noted that there was no update available regarding External Programs for Review.

Regarding Programs in Process, she reported the following: both the PharmD program and the PhD in the History of Art, Design and Visual Culture have completed system review coordination and were forwarded to Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC); the Planning program completed CAQC review, however final approval has been deferred pending a revised funding model; and the freestanding Certificate in Aboriginal Governance and Partnership has received final approval.

12. Question Period

Discussion:

There were no questions.

INFORMATION ITEMS

13. Items Approved by the GFC Academic Standards Committee by E-mail Ballots (non-debatable)

There were no items.

14. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

Alberta Advanced Education and Technology New Degree Program Proposals Under Review at March 31, 2011 (sent by e-mail on April 18, 2011)

15. Adjournment

The Acting Chair adjourned the meeting at 11.15 am.