General Faculties Council
Committee on the Learning Environment
Approved Open Session Minutes

Wednesday, May 01, 2013
2-31 South Academic Building
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Voting Members:

Bill Connor	Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) and Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee)
Emerson Csorba (Delegate)	Vice-President (Academic), Students' Union
Colin More (Delegate)	President, Graduate Students' Association
Scott Delinger (Delegate)	Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Information Technology)
Sheree Kwong See	Interim Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning
Ada Ness (Delegate)	Vice-Provost and University Registrar
John Boeglin	Academic Staff
Brock Richardson	Support Staff
Lili Liu	Department Chair
Fern Snart	Dean
Florence Myrick	Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning (Representative)
Deanna Williamson	Cross-Representative from the GFC Academic Planning Committee
Janet Scott Hoyt	Major Teaching Award Recipient

Presenters:

John Boeglin	Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment Subcommittee on Fostering Pedagogy of Technology
Bill Connor	Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) and Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee)
Larry Kostiuk	Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering and Chairs' Representative on the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment Subcommittee on the Status of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction
Josh Ryder	Information Technology Strategic Initiatives Officer, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Sheree Kwong See	Interim Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning, and Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment Subcommittee on the Status of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction

Staff:

Garry Bodnar   Coordinator, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment
Andrea Patrick   Scribe

OPENING SESSION

1.   Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Discussion:
Dr Connor updated members that "Item 4: GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies Final Report: Continuing Discussion" would be removed from the Agenda as presenters were not able to attend this meeting. This item, he noted, will be deferred until the next meeting.

Motion: Boeglin/Williamson

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Agenda, as amended.
CARRIED

2.   Approval of the Open Session Minutes of April 3, 2013

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Kwong See/Williamson

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Minutes of April 3, 2013.
CARRIED

3.   Comments from the Co-Chair

Dr Connor commented on a number of relevant issues to members.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4.   GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on the Status of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) Draft Report for Discussion

Material before members is contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Sheree Kwong See, Interim Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning, and Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment Subcommittee on the Status of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI); Larry Kostiuk, Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering and Chairs' Representative on the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment Subcommittee on the Status of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI)

Purpose of the Proposal: To update GFC CLE on the GFC CLE Subcommittee on the Status of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) draft report.

Discussion:
Dr Kwong See briefed members on the history of the original 2009 report from a GFC CLE subcommittee that had investigated the usage of USRIs, noting that Dr Connor had requested in November, 2012 that the current GFC CLE subcommittee which she chairs re-visit this 2009 report and conceptualize methods to update current relevant policy as well as translate recommendations into action.

She continued by reporting that the current draft report contains specific recommendations from the Subcommittee on the four original questions posed within the aforementioned 2009 report. She stated that the Subcommittee has suggested that a Working Group could be coordinated, with an aim to frame a proposal including possibly moving General Faculties Council (GFC) Policy Manual Section 111 into the University of Alberta Policies and Procedures Online (UAPPOL) platform.

During the ensuing discussion, members expressed several comments and questions, including, but not limited to: support for the recommendation surrounding multifaceted teaching; support for the recommendation surrounding GFC policy; that there needs to be education directed towards students about how to effectively use the USRI; the impact of USRI data within Faculty Evaluation Committee (FEC) activities, with Dr Kostiuk providing some background to his experiences in this regard within his Faculty, Engineering; different ways in which the USRI questions are written and interpreted; that being branded as a research-intensive university has allowed the focus to shift away from teaching activities; that USRIs could be more focused around student learning; the possible creation of a greater focus on educating FEC members on USRIs; and the possibility of providing guidance to faculty members to evaluate their own teaching.

Dr Kwong See thanked members for their comments and stated she will finalize the report for presentation and endorsement at the next meeting of GFC CLE scheduled for June 5, 2013.

5. University of Alberta's Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL): Update from the Interim Director

There were no documents.

Presenter: Sheree Kwong See, Interim Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:
Dr Kwong See provided a summary of recent activities planned at the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL), which include one-on-one course reviews, a series on course design, and several teaching-related presentations and workshops.

6. GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on Fostering Pedagogy of Technology: Update

There were no documents.

Presenter: John Boeglin, Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment Subcommittee on Fostering Pedagogy of Technology

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:

Dr Boeglin reported that the group will be meeting on May 8, 2013.

7.   Working Group on Online Course/Teaching Evaluations: Update

There were no documents.

Presenter: Josh Ryder, Information Technology Strategic Initiatives Officer, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:
Mr Ryder provided an update to members, stating that a trial entitled 'Course Eval' was recently completed within the Faculty of Science. He also noted that a round table discussion surrounding incentivizing the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) process is being organized and that all members would be invited.   He reported that three or four Faculties have expressed interest in participating in e-USRI trials, as well.

He stated that average response rates on hard-copy USRIs remain around 81% at the University of Alberta, which is similar to e-USRI rates--the cost of e-USRIs, however, is much cheaper. He noted that additional data, nonetheless, needs to be gathered.

During the discussion, members asked several questions, including, but not limited to: the issue of confidentiality *versus* anonymity in the USRI process; whether a Campus Computing Identification (CCID) would be required to sign in and/or track the user data; and whether there will be a process in place to determine how to treat feedback on an e-USRI deemed to be abusive.

STANDING ITEMS

8.   GFC Academic Planning Committee (APC) Update

There were no documents.

Presenter: Bill Connor, Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) and Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee)

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:
There was no discussion.

9.   GFC Academic Standards Committee (ASC) Update

There were no documents.

Presenter: Bill Connor, Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) and Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee)

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:

There was no discussion.

10. <u>GFC Facilities Development Committee (FDC) Update</u>

There were no documents.

Presenter: Bill Connor, Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) and Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee)

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:
There was no discussion.

11. <u>Teaching, Learning and Technology (TLAT) Council Update</u>

There were no documents.

Presenter: Bill Connor, Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) and Co-Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee)

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:
There was no discussion.

12. <u>Question Period</u>

There were no questions.

INFORMATION REPORTS

13. <u>Items Approved by the Committee by E-Mail Ballots</u>

There were no items.

14. <u>Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings</u>

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

15. <u>Adjournment</u>

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:20 pm.