



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

Wednesday, September 02, 2015  
2-31 South Academic Building (SAB)  
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

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**ATTENDEES:**

Voting Members:

Gerald Beasley	Member, Vice-Provost and Chief Librarian and Acting Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)
John Boeglin	Member, Academic Staff
Shannon Erichsen	Member, Support staff representative (Category B1.0), elected by GFC
Roger Graves	Member, Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning
Jacqueline Leighton	Member, Chair Representative, selected by Chairs' Council
Glen Loppnow	Member, Associate Dean or Associate Chair, Teaching and Learning (or equivalent)
Luis Fernando Marin	Member, Graduate Student at-Large
Fahim Rahman	Member, Vice-President (Academic), Students' Union, V-P Academic (SU)
Toni Samek	Member, Major Teaching Award Recipient, Staff Representative
Harsh Thaker	Member, Vice-President (Academic), Graduate Students' Association, V-P Academic (GSA)
Mani Vaidyanathan	Member, Academic Staff
Stanley Varnhagen	Member, Academic Staff
Sarah Stahlke	Member, Academic staff member (Category A1.0)* and currently a member of GFC
Sarah Forgie	Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives) and Incoming Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)

Presenter(s):

Gerald Beasley	Vice-Provost and Chief Librarian and Acting Chair, GFC CLE
John Boeglin	Chair, GFC CLE Subcommittee on Fostering Pedagogy of Technology
Marion Haggarty-France	University Secretary
Roger Graves	Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

Staff:

Meg Brolley, Coordinator, GFC CLE  
Andrea Patrick, Scribe

**OPENING SESSION**

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter:* Gerald Beasley, Vice-Provost and Chief Librarian and Acting Chair, GFC CLE

Motion: Loppnow/Boeglin

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Agenda.

**CARRIED**

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of May 6, 2015

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter:* Gerald Beasley, Vice-Provost and Chief Librarian and Acting Chair, GFC CLE

Motion: Leighton/Thaker

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Minutes of May 6, 2015.

**CARRIED**

3. Comments from the Chair

The Acting Chair reported that he will serve as Acting Chair on this singular occasion, and invited members to introduce themselves.

Ms Haggarty-France introduced Ms Meg Brolley, new General Faculties Council (GFC) Secretary and Manager of GFC Services.

The Acting Chair announced that Dr Sarah Forgie, incoming Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives) will assume the role of Chair of GFC CLE at the next meeting. He noted that Dr Heather Zwicker will be joining the Committee as the delegate from the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR).

4. Comments from the University Secretary for the New Academic Year

There were no documents.

*Presenter:* Marion Haggarty-France, University Secretary

*Discussion:*

Ms Haggarty-France welcomed members to the new academic year and made note of the many technological changes underway within the University of Alberta community, specific to students. She encouraged members to continue pay close attention to the way these technologies are impacting teaching and learning.

She acknowledged the service of new members as well as existing members of the Committee, as well as the team in University Governance. She explained that this year, in particular, will be a year of learning and transition.

She explained that the work of the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) is incredibly important and that the activities undertaken by the Committee will be reported directly to General Faculties Council (GFC) regularly. She encouraged members to review the Terms of Reference for GFC CLE, specifically the amendments made in 2014-15 to include more emphasis on Learning Services within the

Committee's mandate. She pointed out the resources available on the University Governance website in relation to orientation materials.

She concluded by reminding members that they act on behalf of the whole academy, under delegated authority of GFC. She thanked members for their continued, thoughtful engagement. She also pointed out that the first Governance 101 session will be held on September 15, 2015 in the newly designed Council Chamber in University Hall.

The Acting Chair thanked Ms Haggarty-France for her presentation and encouraged members to review the orientation material available on the University Governance website.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### 5. Centre for Teaching and Learning: Update

There were no documents.

*Presenter:* Roger Graves, Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

*Discussion:*

Dr Graves provided members with a comprehensive report of recent activities hosted by the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL), including:

- 17 events since May
- Two major symposiums/conferences
- Professional Development seminar for Neusoft, University of China
- Continue to support Blended Learning projects and MOOC development
- Working now to coordinate the management of MOOCs between the University and Coursera
- TLEF professional development funds are available for all instructors on campus—up to \$5000 over any two-year period and that this program is undersubscribed.
- New web page on Research on Teaching and Learning at UAlberta
- New eClass course under development for launch this fall: Concepts in Course Design
- Assess this: Educational Assessment Challenges and Practical Solutions Symposium, held on Aug 6, 2015
- CTL New Professor Teaching Orientation, held on Aug 12, 2015
- Large Classroom Engagement, held on May 4, 2015
- Festival of Teaching Spots, five minute talks by innovative teachers
- Conceptions of Teaching and Learning: Understand Your Teaching Beliefs and Their Relationship with Student Learning, held on May 6, 2015
- Multifaceted Summative Evaluation of Teaching symposium, held on May 7, 2015
- Cultural Competency in the Undergraduate Classroom: Cross-Disciplinary Tools, Insights and Strategies to Promote Student Success, held on May 11, 2015
- Order Matters: Becoming Metacognitive about Teaching Choices, held on May 11, 2015
- AIBA Keynote: Beyond Assessing Knowledge, held on May 12, 2015
- Designing Your Blended Course, held on May 12, 2015
- Optimizing Group Work, held on May 14, 2015

- "Real Work Is Better Than Homework", held on May 14, 2015
- Designing Your Blended Course, held on May 19, 2015
- CTL SIG: Spring Game-Based Education (GABE) Meeting, held on May 26, 2015
- Designing Your Blended Course, held on May 26, 2015
- Peer Consultant Lunch Meeting, held on May 27, 2015
- Exploring the Ethics of Teaching Professionalism, held on May 28, 2015

During the discussion in regards to this update, Dr Graves took questions and comments from members. On the issue of the new collaborative learning classroom in Cameron, he clarified that there is no fee to book the room, and that it is centrally booked. He also indicated that room orientation can be arranged through the CTL website. In relation to a question regarding the cost of the classroom, Dr Graves noted that it cost \$130,000. He explained that the classroom can hold 42 students. As for the underutilization of TLEF, Dr Graves commented that perhaps teaching staff are unaware of the program. A member reported that CTL had been helpful in solving an issue and thanked Dr Graves.

#### 6. CLE Subcommittee on Fostering Pedagogy of Technology: Update

There were no documents.

*Presenter:* John Boeglin, Chair, GFC CLE Subcommittee on Fostering Pedagogy of Technology

##### *Discussion:*

Dr Boeglin reported that the surveys generated a large amount of data and that progress has been made in providing a narrative alongside the charts and tables. He noted that the challenge remains piecing together the big picture of all of the results, and that his goal is to do so by the end of this term.

#### 7. Renewal of CLE Possible Agenda Items for Consideration

Materials before members are contained in official meeting file.

*Presenter:* Gerald Beasley, Vice-Provost and Chief Librarian and Acting Chair, GFC CLE

##### *Discussion:*

The Acting Chair pointed out the document entitled "Possible Agenda Items for Consideration" on the University Governance website, and recommended that members discuss an updated work plan surrounding the teaching and learning environment. He encouraged members to make suggestions for an updated list.

During the discussion in regards to potential agenda items, members provided the following suggestions:

- E-USRI (electronic Universal Student Ratings of Instruction): An update and perspectives from academic staff and students
- GFC-mandated USRI questions – are they still applicable?
- The impact of technology on teaching and learning
- Review of wireless service and infrastructure overall at the University of Alberta, in support of instructional technology

- Alternative delivery of teaching materials
- Learning outcomes
- Quality of graduate education supervision (perhaps drafting regulations for supervisors)
- Copyright
- The new Research and Collection Resource Facility (RCRF) planned for South Campus, in relation to learning spaces
- Inclusive classrooms (supportive ways to maximize learning for all students)
- Cheating and plagiarism detection systems
- Mandatory physical characteristics of classrooms at the University of Alberta
- The possibility of creating a teaching tenure stream
- Standards and expectations of the learning environment at the University of Alberta
- Input from the Faculty of Native Studies on teaching and learning

Dr Forgie suggested that members rank this list of suggestions before drafting the work plan.

Members, during the discussion in relation to this list, expressed several comments and questions. On the issue of how these topics could be developed into proposals, the Acting Chair noted that some topics require the work of a subcommittee, while others can be properly addressed through normal Committee deliberation. He added, as well, that assigning proper leads to tackle some of these topics could be determined after ranking occurs. Regarding the mandate of the Committee, the Acting Chair clarified that GFC CLE has been tasked to make recommendations concerning policy matters with respect to the promotion of the optimal learning environment at the University. Ms Patrick reported that substantial work has already been conducted surrounding at least eight of these topics from various Subcommittees of CLE and other GFC Standing Committees, and that in many cases, projects would not need to be started at square one. She noted that the reports of these bodies could be disseminated to members. Members discussed ways to maximize the impact of any reports generated by the Committee.

The Acting Chair thanked members for their suggestions and stated that further ideas are welcome at any time.

8. Question Period

There were no questions.

**INFORMATION REPORTS**

9. Items Approved by the Committee by E-Mail Ballots (non-debatable)

There were no items.

10. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

**CLOSING SESSION**

11. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m.