



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council
Council on Students Affairs
Approved Open Session Minutes

Thursday, November 28, 2019
3-07 South Academic Building (SAB)
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Steven Dew, Chair
Dylan Ashley
Akanksha Bhatnagar
André Costopoulos
David Draper
Anastasia Elias
Melissa Padfield

Samantha Tse
Alan Underhill

REGRETS:

Katherine Belcourt
Teddy Carter
Melinda Chisholm
Ian Gatera

Dhanvanth Soora

Staff:

Ann Hodgson, University
Governance
David Epp, Scribe

OPENING SESSION

1 Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Mover/Seconder: Padfield/Draper

THAT the Council on Student Affairs approve the agenda.

CARRIED

2. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and Chair, COSA

The Chair welcomed Alan Underhill, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, as a new academic staff member of COSA.

The Chair provided updates from topics discussed at the September 26, 2019 COSA meeting:

- Consultation and discussion are continuing on the undergraduate honorifics item and the Vice-Provost (Programs) shared feedback from COSA with the Associate Dean, Undergraduate, Faculty of Science.
- Following an extensive consultation process, the university submitted its preliminary statement on free expression to the Ministry on November 15. The statement was considered by GFC on November 25th, and at that time GFC approved the addition of one sentence to the statement: *“However, this administrative discretion should not be exercised in a manner inconsistent with the University of Alberta’s overarching commitment to free expression.”* The statement will now move forward to the Board of Governors for December 13 and the final, approved version needs to be posted by December 15 to meet Government requirements.
- The University Registrar (Interim), provided an update on the work to rescind the Awards and Bursaries for Students Policy and approve a new Student Financial Support Policy. She noted that the parameters for Indigenous Careers Award has changed so that students in all programs of study are eligible for funding but that the total amount of available funds was reduced by \$612K to a total of \$860K in funding.

The Chair noted that Melissa Padfield will be the new Vice-Provost and University Registrar effective December 1, 2019.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda Mover/Seconder: Ashley/Elias

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of September 26, 2019

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

THAT the Council on Student Affairs approve the Open Session Minutes of September 26, 2019.

CARRIED

EARLY CONSULTATION

4. Planning for the QA (Quality Assurance) Administrative Portfolio Review of the Office of the Dean of Students

Presenter(s): André Costopoulos, Vice-Provost and Dean of Students; Tammy Hopper, Vice-Provost (Programs)

Purpose of the Proposal: To discuss student engagement planning leading up to the first QA Administrative Portfolio Review of the Office of the Dean of Students, scheduled in February, 2020.

This will include:

- An overview of the University's QA Suite of Activities;
- A description of the student focus groups and meetings being organized to gather student feedback in preparation for the review;
- To obtain feedback from COSA on student engagement during the two-day site visit.

Discussion: Dr Hopper stated that the Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC) requires that academic units have a Quality Assurance (QA) review every seven years, and noted that it is not required by CAQC, but the university also reviews administrative units, and next year the Office of the Dean of Students was chosen.

Dr Costopoulos provided more detail on the process, which includes a self-study report, an expert site visit and review during Reading Week 2020, including Campus Saint-Jean and Augustana, their report with recommendations, and the unit's response. COSA, as a stakeholder, will be consulted for the self-study, and some COSA members may meet with the review committee. Dr Costopolous invited COSA members for input on preparing for the report, for example, what their needs and expectations are, should the Office of the Dean of Students be doing more, and what changes would they make, including to Student Services.

Responses from members included, but were not limited to: incorporating a cultural lens on wellness issues; a proactive and integrated attempt to limit silos on campus to reduce feelings of isolation; sexual violence response coordination through a distributed approach; and more work on how to improve the evaluation of students.

5. Student Life Policy and Student Caregiver Procedure

Presenter(s): André Costopoulos, Vice-Provost and Dean of Students; Sarah Wolgemuth, Assistant Dean, Student Life

Purpose of the Proposal: The Office of the Dean of Students seeks feedback from COSA members as it develops the Student Life Policy and Student Caregiver Procedure.

Discussion: Ms Wolgemuth provided background information on the item noting there is a placeholder in UAPPOL to establish a Student Life Policy and an associated procedure on students with dependents, which will also act as a statement of the university's commitment to students.

Dr Costopoulos noted that current policies are based on traditional student demographics and the diversity of the student population in terms of average student age, number of students with dependents (children or elderly), and number of students that are working have all gone up, and the challenge is to accommodate them with suitable practices. On average, two percent of students now have children, and it was noted that the number is closer to 20% in the Faculty of Native Studies.

Comments and questions from members included, but were not limited to: ensure that the policy values are acted upon; provide students with information of what resources are available; make the environmental supports in the draft policy more explicit; incorporate ideas from students in the policy; and coordinate and publicize resources such as dedicated nursing spaces.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

6. Teaching Evaluation and Assessment

Presenter(s): John Nychka, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives), Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment

Purpose of the Proposal: The item is for committee discussion to guide the development of new teaching assessment and evaluation policies.

Discussion: Dr Nychka asked COSA members to provide feedback on how do we define and assess effective teaching.

Comments and questions from members included, but were not limited to: administer an exit interview with graduate students; aligning instructor goals and learning outcomes to student achievements; iterative feedback is important; make current USRI database easier to find and use for students, and possibly link to relevant teaching awards; how Faculty Evaluation Committees (FECs) inform teaching and whether they should be consistent across Faculties; linking USRIs to Bear Tracks; and acknowledging that graduate supervision issues are in the consultation stage.

7. Weapons on Campus

Presenter(s): Marcel Roth, Director, Protective Services; Trudy Triplett, Investigator, Protective Services

Purpose of the Proposal: To provide an overview of the incidents of weapons and replicas on campus and discuss strategies to mitigate risk.

Discussion: Mr Roth utilized a presentation and noted that they are now consulting for amendments to the Code of Student Behaviour (COSB) to be in effect for Fall 2020 to include weapon offenses and definitions of weapons. He stressed that updating the COSB is the first stage in addressing this issue and the next phase will encompass the institution more broadly.

8. Red Tape for Students: What Bugs You? (no documents)

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and Chair, COSA

Discussion: The Chair noted that one government initiative is to reduce red tape and they have indicated that post-secondary institutions should do the same. Pointing out that red tape is really only apparent when you are faced with it, the Chair asked members to give examples of red tape that students feel hinder their university experience.

Responses from members included, but were not limited to: difficulty in changing demographic information, for example, for some awards, especially transgender labels; some red tape is necessary; improve academic advisor access to student degree requirements; internships for international students; and the large financial penalty for international graduate students defending in October, not September, due to tuition assessment.

9. Student Rights and Responsibilities Resource

Presenter(s): Akanksha Bhatnagar, President, Students' Union

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee to gain feedback on a planned approach to improving students' awareness of their rights and responsibilities in the context of University Policy.

Discussion: Ms Bhatnagar used a presentation, which utilized survey results, to inform members of the issue and to support the Students' Union proposal to create a Charter of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Comments and questions from members included, but were not limited to: a suitable online home for information on student rights, be it a navigator, a FAQ, or a repository, which would supplement the physical student orientation in September; increase awareness for faculty and staff and highlight what is not acceptable; align with student life policy and demonstrate university values; and how best to communicate and interact with students.

10. Discussion on Topics for Committee Workplan (no documents)

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and Chair, COSA

Discussion: Due to time constraints, the Chair asked members to send him suggestions for future agenda items by email.

11. Question Period

There were no questions

INFORMATION REPORTS

12. Items Approved by the Committee by email Ballots (non-debatable) (no items to date)

13. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings (no items to date)

CLOSING SESSION

14. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 6:00 p.m.