



General Faculties Council
Executive Committee
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, June 15, 2020
Virtual Meeting
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

David Turpin, Chair
Adarsh Badesha
Steven Dew
David Draper
Duncan Elliott
Mary Forhan
Bill Foster
Christopher Lupke

Pierre-Yves Mocquais
Roger Moore
Melissa Padfield
Sachiketha Reddy
Eleni Stroulia
non-voting:
Marion Haggarty-France
Yimmie Sonuga

REGRETS:

Sean McMurtry

Guest:

Bill Flanagan, President-elect

Staff:

Heather Richholt, Scribe
Brad Hamdon, General Counsel

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): David Turpin, President and Vice-Chancellor, Chair of GFC Executive Committee (Exec)

Discussion:

The Chair noted that the letter sent to members of the Executive Committee would be discussed in Item 12, the approval of the Agenda for the General Faculties Council meeting of June 22, 2020.

Motion: Elliott/Dew

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Comments from the Chair

- Report on *For the Public Good*

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): David Turpin, President and Vice-Chancellor, Chair of Exec

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the final GFC Executive Committee meeting of the year and asked the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) to give an update on the budget.

Dr Dew explained that the provincial government had recently made the decision to postpone the implementation of the Institutional Management Agreement and Performance Based Funding Measures, and suspend the Expenditure Reduction Targets. He noted that the university was still required to contend with the \$110 million cut to the Campus Alberta Grant and could not run a deficit budget or use carry-forward funds.

Dr Dew noted that the closures of the Winspear and HT Coutts Libraries were in response to budgetary cuts but that the collections and librarians had been relocated so that they would continue to be available to the campus community.

In regards to the Faculty of Extension reorganization, Dr Dew explained that the academic programs were moving to other Faculties but that Extension's continuing and professional education and English Language School activities would continue. Offering lifelong learning opportunities for Albertans and English language support for our international students remained core to the university and Extension would continue growing these activities.

The Chair noted that Peggy Garritty would be officially installed as the University of Alberta's 22nd Chancellor in a small, intimate ceremony with strong social distancing measures in place later that week.

He also reminded members that GFC was asked to assist in the election of two faculty members to sit on the Advisory Search Committee for the Vice-President (Advancement) and encouraged all faculty members to consider putting their names forward for this committee.

The Chair also spoke about the previous week's virtual convocation and thanked the Office of the Registrar and the University Relations team for putting the ceremony together.

The Chair noted that the *For the Public Good* report was distributed with the agenda. He said that while it was true that the university was under a lot of pressure with the budget cuts and the pandemic, many positive things had happened over the past 5 years that should be acknowledged, including the transformation of academic governance.

University Secretary, Marion Haggarty-France thanked the Chair for his leadership over his term as President and thanked outgoing GFC Executive Committee members Bill Foster and Duncan Elliott for their contributions.

Members discussed:

- a potential gap in university policy as regards harassment and discrimination towards students in experiential learning environments;
- that *For the Public Good* should be renewed for another 5 years; and
- that communication around the good work that the university had done, and continued to do, should be strengthened so that the public was more engaged and aware.

The President-elect affirmed that he wished to encourage more work on engagement with the public and with the government on *For the Public Good* as well as the urgency of the current crisis and optimism for the future.

CONSENT AGENDA

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Consent Agenda Mover and Seconder: Moore/Dew

3. A. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of May 4, 2020

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the open session minutes of May 4, 2020.

CARRIED

B. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of May 11, 2020

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the open session minutes of May 11, 2020.
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CARRIED

ACTION ITEMS

4. Proposed Changes to Education Faculty Council Composition and Quorum

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Lynn McGarvey, Vice Dean, Faculty of Education

Purpose of the Proposal: This proposal is before the committee to seek approval of the changes to Faculty Council composition and quorum.

Discussion:

Dr McGarvey explained the proposed changes.

A member asked about the election of graduate student representatives on Faculty Council.

Motion: Mocquais/Dew

THAT the GFC Executive Committee, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, approve the proposed changes to Education Faculty Council Composition and Quorum, as set forth in attachment 1, to take effective July 1, 2020.

CARRIED

5. Final Report of GFC Executive's Transition Committee

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Eleni Stroulia, Chair of GFC Executive's Transition Committee

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee to report on the activities and outcomes of the transition committee.

Discussion:

Dr Stroulia gave a high-level overview of the implementation of the ad hoc Committee on Academic Governance Including Delegated Authority's recommendations and thanked the members of the ad hoc and the Transition Committees for their work.

There were no questions.

Motion: Stroulia/Elliott

THAT the GFC Executive Committee recommend that General Faculties Council discharge, with thanks, the GFC Executive ad hoc Transition Committee.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

6. Update GFC Membership Reapportionment

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Yimmie Sonuga, Secretary to GFC and Manager of GFC Services

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee to provide an update on GFC membership reapportionment efforts, currently underway, in accordance with the GFC Reapportionment Procedure.

Discussion:

Ms Sonuga gave a brief explanation of the reapportionment process and noted that the final document would be available on the Governance website once it was completed.

There were no questions.

7. Building Capacity in the Graduate Student Experience, Graduate Student Success, and Excellence in the Graduate Student- Supervisory Relationship

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Brooke Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee to provide an update on a suite of initiatives introduced by the office of the Vice-Provost and Dean (FGSR) in the Fall of 2019 that, when operationalized, will lead to transformative changes to the graduate student experience at the University of Alberta.

Discussion:

Dr Milne gave an overview of the work that had been done to develop the tools and spoke to the pilots and the expected timeline for full implementation.

Members discussed the transfer of data to and from other systems on campus, and the enthusiastic support of the Graduate Students' Association for this initiative.

8. Upcoming Considerations (no documents)

Presenter(s): David Turpin, President and Vice-Chancellor, Chair of Exec

Discussion:

Tammy Hopper, Vice-Provost (Programs), and John Nychka, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives), spoke about the need for revisions to examination and assessment regulations due to the changes to remote delivery necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. They explained that a full-scale review and consultation on proposed changes to the policy and procedure would begin in the fall, but that the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) would provide guidance for instructors to use in the interim.

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

- a jurisdictional scan to consider the methods used by other universities;
- Athabasca University's online delivery and assessment practices;
- the restrictions regarding the use of webcams with remote testing due to student privacy concerns;
- a potential shift in pedagogical thinking to include alternate forms of assessment;
- concerns that the amount of time needed for alternate forms of assessment would be prohibitive;
- concerns that the large amount of cheating that was happening in the remote environment would normalize cheating;
- that asynchronous assessment and instruction were more accessible, given the differing levels of internet connectivity and technology among the student population;
- the importance of synchronous or in-person instruction and assessment for some disciplines;
- efforts underway to help students access better technology and connectivity;
- when students would be informed of which courses would meet the exceptions for in-person instruction in the fall; and
- whether there would be changes to the add/drop deadline for fall term 2020 courses.

9. Academic Governance Emergency Protocols (Standing Item)

Presenter(s): David Turpin, President and Vice-Chancellor, Chair of Exec

A. COVID-19 Governance Decision Tracker (link)

B. Fall 2020 / Winter 2021 Planning Overview

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic); Andrew Sharman, Vice-President (Facilities and Operations)

Purpose of the Proposal: This is before the committee to provide an overview of university's plans to deliver the highest quality learning experience, ensure that world leading research continues, and that students have the opportunity to participate in a vibrant campus community from wherever they are for the fall 2020 term.

Additionally, the planning overview highlights the parameters within which decisions will be made related to the winter 2021 term.

Discussion:

Dr Dew noted that fall term 2020 instruction would be primarily offered by remote delivery with some in-person exceptions. He explained that applications for exceptions were under review and that decisions would be made and communicated soon.

Mr Sharman explained that government regulations had eased and that some research had resumed on campus. He noted that select staff were being brought back to campus but that those who could work from home were asked to continue to do so. He spoke to the importance of following the province's health and safety regulations and moving forward in a sustainable manner. He noted the following considerations for returning to campus:

- Health and Safety
- Pedagogy
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Available space and required supports (including cleaning)
- The government's relaunch plan regulations, and restrictions regarding public health (including tracking and tracing)

Mr Sharman also explained the expected complications of influenza season as anyone who exhibited symptoms would have to be treated as if they had COVID-19 until proven otherwise.

The Chair reminded members that it was 29 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Edmonton that launched the March 2020 closure of the University.

Members discussed the following points:

- restrictions on university owned and sublet residences such as Fraternities;
- messaging around cooperative and respectful reporting and tracing rather than "watch and report on others"; and
- messaging around the unique considerations regarding the operation of an institution the size of the university and how it is much different from high schools, for example.

The Chair thanked all the members of the community who were working hard to manage the university through this crisis.

10. University of Alberta for Tomorrow (UAT)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Bill Flanagan, President-elect; Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic); Gitta Kulczycki, Vice-President (Finance and Administration)

Purpose of the Proposal: The Purpose of this Proposal is to continue GFC's engagement with President-elect Bill Flanagan's vision for transformation at the University of Alberta. In particular, today's item includes discussion of the principles drafted by the Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG).

Discussion:

The President-elect noted that he had received good buy-in and optimism from the community so far and was hoping for some feedback from the Executive Committee on the principles contained in the meeting materials.

Dr Dew explained that the goal was to simplify and streamline in response to the financial crisis, but to also use the opportunity of restructuring to find advantages including greater interdisciplinarity and flexibility for whatever the future brings. He spoke about the composition of the Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG), the involvement of the GFC Academic Planning Committee, and GFC, and the expected timelines for consultation and planning.

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

- plans for consultation with student groups;
- anxiety in the smaller Faculties regarding the future of their organizations;
- the plan to move toward a new structure by July 2021 because of the financial imperative;
- that there was no plan to make dramatic changes to the program and teaching structure or to reduce the number of professors at that time;
- the composition of the ARWG;
- the importance of assuring that programs can maintain accreditation; and
- that members of the community were encouraged to email their concerns to the email address on the UAT website.

11. Question Period

There were no questions.

ACTION ITEMS

12. Draft Agenda for the Next Meeting of General Faculties Council

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): David Turpin, President and Vice-Chancellor, Chair of Exec

Purpose of the Proposal: To approve the Agenda for the GFC meeting to be held on Monday, June 22, 2020.

Discussion:

The Chair noted that a letter was recently submitted to all members of the GFC Executive Committee by a GFC member, which included a request to add motions to the Agenda of the next GFC. The Executive Committee was asked to discuss this request and find the best way to address it.

The Chair noted that the Chief Medical Officer of Health's (CMOH) guidelines and the health and safety of the university community were key priorities and the Public Health Response Team's Subcommittee on Academic Impacts was currently working on requests for exceptions to remote delivery for the fall term.

Members discussed:

- the authority given to the Board of Governors and the General Faculties Council (GFC) through the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*;
- the jurisdictions of the two governing bodies;
- section A10 of the Collective Agreement between The Governors of the University of Alberta and The Association of the Academic Staff of the University of Alberta (AASUA) and the clearly defined course of action that would have to be followed if a reorganization as defined in the section was to occur;
- that transparency of process was key and that documents would be shared in so far as was possible;
- that the approval of GFC and the Board of Governors would be sought after thorough consultation;
- frustration that letters and motions such as this without complete information were not productive and hi-jacked meetings;
- that GFC could make suggestions to the Board of Governors but could not make demands outside the scope of its authority; and
- that the proposed motions were not useful but that a discussion about transparency and authority would be good for GFC.

The Chair proposed that a new discussion item 10 be added to the draft GFC Agenda. Background information and a Governance Executive Summary would be prepared and the letter received from the member, would be included.

Motion: Dew/Padfield

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the Agenda for the June 22, 2020 meeting of General Faculties Council, as set forth in Attachment 1, as amended.

CARRIED

INFORMATION REPORTS

13. Items Approved by the GFC Executive Committee by email ballots

There were no items.

14. Information Items Forwarded to GFC Executive Committee between Meetings

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

15. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:20 p.m.