



# UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

## UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council  
Programs Committee  
Approved Open Session Minutes

Thursday, November 19, 2020  
Zoom Virtual Meeting  
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

### **ATTENDEES:**

Tammy Hopper, Chair  
J Nelson Amaral  
David Draper  
Joel Gehman  
Florence Glanfield  
Nathalie Kermaal  
Brooke Milne  
Heather Seyl Miyashita  
Donia Mounsef

Karsten Mündel  
Melissa Padfield  
Hanne Pearce  
Sachiketha Reddy  
Victoria Ruetalo  
Christopher Sturdy  
Minn-Nyoung Yoon  
*non-voting:*  
Kate Peters  
Natalie Sharpe

### **REGRETS:**

Ananya Sarkar  
Brad Hamdon  
Helen Vallianatos

### Staff:

Heather Richholt, Coordinator

### **OPENING SESSION**

#### 1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* Tammy Hopper, Vice-Provost (Programs) and Chair of GFC Programs Committee (PC)

*Motion:* Padfield/Amaral

THAT the GFC Programs Committee approve the agenda.

**CARRIED**

#### 2. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

*Presenter(s):* Tammy Hopper, Vice-Provost (Programs) and Chair of PC

#### *Discussion:*

In her comments, the Chair touched on the following topics:

- the challenges the community was facing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- remote learning supports available for students and instructors;
- that virtual Convocation would be on November 20, 2020 and would be recorded and available on the University's website; and
- the recent release of the final report of the Academic Restructuring Working Group.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Discussion:*

The Chair reminded members that the course and minor program items in consent agenda Item 4 had been approved by the appropriate Faculty Council, posted for review on the Governance website, and reviewed by the Undergraduate Program Support Team (PST). She noted that if a member had a concern or question about any of the items they should reach out to the Committee Coordinator.

A member asked that the composition of the Graduate PST and Undergraduate PST be shared with the committee with the next meeting's materials.

Consent Agenda Mover and Second: Amaral/Sturdy

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of October 15, 2020

THAT the GFC Programs Committee approve the open session minutes of October 15, 2020.

**CARRIED**

4. Course and Minor Program Changes

- Arts
- Education
- Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation
- Law
- Medicine and Dentistry
- Native Studies
- Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

THAT the GFC Programs Committee, with delegated authority from General Faculties Council, approve the course and minor program change submissions from the Faculties of Arts, Education, Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation, Law, Medicine and Dentistry, Native Studies, and Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

**CARRIED**

5. Items Deemed Minor/Editorial

- A. Entrance Requirements for Communication Sciences & Disorders, Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)

THAT the GFC Programs Committee approve, with delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the proposed change to entrance requirements for graduate programs in Communication Sciences & Disorders, Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR).

**CARRIED**

**ACTION ITEMS**

6. Proposed New Course Designator, SEM (Strategy, Entrepreneurship and Management), Faculty of Business

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* Leo Wong, Associate Dean, Undergraduate, Faculty of Business

*Purpose of the Proposal:* To change the course designator of SMO to SEM in the Department of Strategy, Entrepreneurship and Management

*Discussion:*

Dr Wong explained that this proposal was related to the recent name change of the Department of Strategic Management and Organization to the Department of Strategy, Entrepreneurship and Management and was reflective of the modern and broad areas of expertise within the Department as well as its three majors:

- strategy, management (leadership) and organizations;
- entrepreneurship and innovation; and
- human resources management.

There was no discussion.

Motion: Seyl Miyashita/Padfield

THAT the GFC Programs Committee approve, with delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the new course designator SEM (Strategy, Entrepreneurship and Management) to replace SMO (Strategic Management and Organization), as submitted by the Faculty of Business, to take effect fall 2021.

**CARRIED**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### 7. Programs Committee Mandate and Authority

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* Tammy Hopper, Vice-Provost (Programs) and Chair of PC; Kate Peters, GFC Secretary and Manager, GFC Services

*Purpose of the Proposal:* The proposal is before the committee to provide guidance to members on their role, and the committee's mandate and authority in the GFC structure.

*Discussion:*

The Chair noted that a GFC member had brought forward a motion to amend the terms of reference for the Programs Committee (PC) and that she felt the committee should have a chance to discuss the issue and also welcomed the opportunity for this new committee to have a deeper conversation about their mandate and authority.

The Chair gave members some background on the previous pathway for program approvals and the problems that led to the establishment of PC. She noted that the creation of the committee supported a program approval process that was transparent, straightforward and would bring all components (except resources) of new and revised programs to a single committee for approval.

The Chair explained that the proposed amendment in the motion sought to remove PC's delegated authority to approve new programs, modifications to existing programs, and termination of existing programs. She noted that the proponent pointed out the need for GFC to retain its authority to introduce, modify, suspend, and terminate programs, especially during this period of restructuring.

Ms Peters pointed to the GFC Principle Documents that were approved by GFC on April 21, 2017, in particular the Principles of General Faculties Council Standing Committee Composition and Principles for General Faculties Council Delegations of Authority, which state:

Withdrawal of delegated authority should be considered judiciously based on the best interest of the institution and cannot be done retroactively.

Members discussed:

- levels of anxiety in the community related to restructuring;

- the strong committee composition;
- the appropriateness of the committee's delegated authority and the limits to that authority;
- the pathway for different program related approvals from the Department and Faculty to GFC, the Board of Governors, and the Ministry of Education;
- that program changes, new program development, and suspension of programs all originate with the teaching Faculty and must receive Faculty Council level approval before proceeding to GFC;
- whether GFC Academic Planning Committee's recommendation was necessary in the pathway for program suspensions;
- the regular 3-year review that was required for all of GFC standing committee terms of reference;
- programs and non-credit programs as defined in the PC terms of reference;
- that to change PC's terms of reference to recommend to GFC would add a layer of approval that seemed unnecessary, especially given that there was so much oversight of these proposals at the Faculty level; and
- that revisiting the terms of reference in this way would undermine GFC's Principles and the more than one year of careful work and consultation that went into the development of PC.

The Chair thanked members for their engagement on this issue and explained that she would report to GFC Executive Committee with the committee's feedback.

#### 8. Rescission of GFC Policy 37

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* Tammy Hopper, Vice-Provost (Programs) and Chair of PC; Kate Peters, GFC Secretary and Manager, GFC Services

*Purpose of the Proposal:* The proposal to rescind GFC Policy 37 is the final step in the reorganization of program approval processes.

*Discussion:*

Ms Peters noted the motion that was approved at the October 19, 2020 meeting of GFC:

THAT the General Faculties Council pull the "Proposed Rescission of GFC Policy 37" from the "Consent Agenda" and table it for consideration at a later meeting at which we also first have the opportunity to consider whether GFC wishes to revise the new committee's "Terms."

Ms Peters noted that the motion was linked to the proposed revisions to PC's terms of reference that were discussed in the previous item because the policy covered a process that the creation of PC had changed. She noted that because the policy and the terms of reference were in conflict, University Governance would continue to post course and minor program items for information on the governance website in the interim.

A member asked for clarification on what PC's role was related to course and minor program changes.

Ms Peters explained that it was the Department or Faculty, the subject matter experts, who were responsible for determining their programs of study. She noted that Faculty Councils did approve these items but that this Faculty approval was subject to GFC approval. She indicated that it was the job of this committee and the Undergraduate and Graduate PSTs to review these items with their institutional and governance lenses.

The committee raised no concerns about the rescission of the GFC Policy 37.

#### 9. External Programs for Review and Programs in Progress on Campus: Standing Item (no documents)

*Presenter(s):* Andrea Patrick, Portfolio Initiatives Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

*Discussion:*

The Chair proposed that this update be sent to members by email so that there would be sufficient time for question period.

10. Question Period

*Presenter(s):* Tammy Hopper, Vice-Provost (Programs) and Chair of PC

*Discussion:*

The Chair noted that there had been some questions raised about approval processes and that she welcomed the opportunity to discuss those concerns here.

A member noted concern regarding items coming forward to the committee and pressure to approve them because of Calendar or other deadlines. He wanted members to be clear that it was their responsibility to be specific if they had concerns so that they could be recorded properly, and that it was the committee's responsibility to overrule arguments of urgency and require that concerns were addressed before approval.

Members discussed:

- committee member responsibility to put individual concerns aside and make decisions based on the good of the university;
- how to determine what required committee approval and what could be handled editorially;
- when it would be necessary to send a matter back to Faculty Council for revision; and
- the option to vote yes or no, or to abstain from voting in the case of a conflict of interest.

The Chair acknowledged that there was a balance to be struck regarding editorial and substantive matters but that, in the end, the committee members had the final say when it came to approvals.

## **INFORMATION REPORTS**

11. Items Approved by GFC Programs Committee by email ballots

There were no items.

12. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

## **CLOSING SESSION**

13. Adjournment

- Next Meeting of PC: December 10, 2020
- Next Meeting of GFC: November 23, 2020

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.