

General Faculties Council
Student Conduct Policy Committee (SCPC)
Approved Open Session Minutes

Thursday, September 21, 2023
2-31 South Academic Building (SAB)
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM

ATTENDEES:

Carla Prado, Vice-Chair
Katelyn Brown
Michael Griffiths
Tiffany Kung
Corinne Langinier
Ravina Sanghera
Judith Spiers
Adrienne Wright

non-voting:
Chris Hackett
Kate Peters
Laura Riley
Marcel Roth
Laurel Wilkie

REGRETS:

Joanna Harrington
John Lemieux
Geoffrey Rode

Staff:

Heather Richholt, Coordinator

OPENING SESSION

Before calling the meeting to order, the Vice-Chair acknowledged the territory. She then welcomed members to the first meeting of the academic year and led a round of introductions.

1. Approval of Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Carla Prado, Professor and Vice-Chair of SCPC

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC Student Conduct Policy Committee approve the agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of October 20, 2023

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Carla Prado, Professor and Vice-Chair of SCPC

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC Student Conduct Policy Committee approve the open session minutes of January 19, 2023.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

Presenter(s): Carla Prado, Professor and Vice-Chair of SCPC

Discussion:

The Vice-Chair noted that she has agreed to serve as Vice-Chair again this year and that, according to the SCPC terms of reference, the Vice-Chair is appointed by the GFC Nominating Committee.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. GFC Committee Orientation

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Kate Peters, GFC Secretary and Manager, GFC Services; Heather Richholt, Associate Secretary to GFC

Discussion:

K Peters and H Richholt provided information on the legal framework and principles under which GFC operates, the committee's mandate and terms of reference, and meeting procedures and roles and responsibilities of GFC committee members.

There was no discussion.

5. Student Academic Integrity Policy Suite

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Ravina Sanghera, Vice-Provost and Dean of Students; Chris Hackett, Student Conduct Officer, Student Services

Discussion:

The Vice-Chair spoke about the changes to the Sexual and Gender-based Violence policy suite and the new Student Conduct Policy Suite that were recommended by SCPC, and approved by GFC and the Board the previous year. She explained that this item was related to those changes, that it was a new policy suite to replace the remaining pieces of the Code of Student Behaviour (COSB). She referred to SCPC's mandate to provide oversight and recommend changes to the University's Student Conduct Policies and said that SCPC could expect to recommend rescission of the COSB and approval of this policy suite in its final form some time in the new year.

R Sanghera and C Hackett noted their plan for intentional consultation through the fall to ensure that the University's strategic plans are reflected and woven through this new policy suite. They explained:

- That the COSB was outdated and set up as a "crime and punishment" model that did not reflect how the University wanted to interact with its students;
- Improvements in infrastructure would help to better manage information and track cases, and increased resources would allow the delivery of educational responses rather than punitive ones;
- Restorative or relational justice practices would better help students to understand the impact of their behaviour; and
- Protecting the integrity of the University of Alberta degrees and reputation remained a priority but in a way that is better for our students.

The presenters noted their expectation that members of the university community will review and point out things they have missed or that need to be fixed, and expressed that this is an opportunity to decide who we are as a community. They encouraged members to let them know who else they should engage with.

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

- Time limits to discipline students and whether there could be an accountability measure for deans or a statute of limitations;
- How other policies mention the COSB and revisions that would be needed to make sure they are aligned;
- That the Code of Applicant Behaviour (COAB) needs to be refreshed as well and the current balance between when a student is an applicant and considered under the COAB and when they become a student and are considered under the COSB;
- Whether the Appeals Coordinator would continue to collect and report data for the institution;
- What a “discipline record” is and how information would be collected and managed in those records;
- How the Colleges would be involved in reporting and oversight of the whole discipline process;
- Current inconsistency in discipline across Faculties and whether the new policy will ensure we deal with it in a consistent way;
- Who would lead the investigation or response when an offence is both academic and non-academic;
- That reasonable coordination would be expected and instead of being overly prescriptive, the policy will allow for appropriate decision making within a framework that is not too rigid;
- The potential for overly rigid and legalistic frameworks to prevent flexible and reasonable responses;
- The importance of training and developing a community of practice and resources to guide the coordination of responses;
- That it is expected that the resources and guides be adjusted as we learn more;
- How consultation and revision will be a part of the new framework so that the processes can be continuously improved and unintended consequences can be identified, addressed in the moment, and mitigated going forward in a transparent way;
- That some instructors may not report offences because they do not understand the process, do not know how to report, or find the process too cumbersome, and what resources will be developed for instructors;
- That there have always been reporting issues because the process is too onerous and punitive and instructors are hesitant to damage a student’s career;
- That the new process would be more collaborative and clear for students and instructors with supports built in throughout the process;
- That ensuring the processes are simple and clear and that the burden is not on the instructor would increase reporting of minor offences and help to prevent future escalations;
- How the university will manage to support this process with the increasing enrolment that is expected in the coming years;
- Whether it could be explicit in the policy suite that restorative justice and practice are the norm and that there would have to be a justification if those practices were not used so that more severe and punitive responses are only used for severe offences;
- Whether there would be support for Campus Saint-Jean students to engage with the process in French;
- Consulting with international students about language and with Indigenous students about Elder support; and
- That there will need to be conversations and considerations that go beyond this policy suite.

CLOSING SESSION

6. Adjournment

- Next Meeting of SCPC: October 19, 2023
- Next Meeting of GFC: October 16, 2023