



General Faculties Council
Academic Planning Committee
Approved Open Session Minutes

Wednesday, October 07, 2020
Zoom Virtual Meeting
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Steven Dew, Chair
Joel Agarwal
Chris Andersen
Amlan Bose
Martin Coutts
Walter Dixon
Shannon Erichsen
Jelena Holovati

Susanne Luhmann
Pirkko Markula
Melissa Padfield
Jerine Pegg
Susan Sommerfeldt
Marc Waddingham
Sheena Wilson
Ding Xu
Yan Yuan

non-voting:

Brad Hamdon
Kate Peters

REGRETS:

Kisha Supernant

Staff:

Heather Richholt, Scribe

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

Motion: Andersen/Agarwal

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

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

Discussion:

The Chair noted congratulations to Michael Houghton for winning the Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine.

The Chair explained that winter 2021 would continue with a mix of in person and online courses and that the process to determine which courses could be offered in person would follow public health guidelines. Melissa Padfield, Vice-Provost and Registrar noted that the information regarding winter term courses was shared with Deans on October 5 and had been sent to GFC members the previous week as well. She pointed out that the University was following similar processes as the University of Lethbridge and the University of Calgary.

A member asked if there had been conversations with other institutions in Alberta regarding budget cuts. The Chair noted the cuts were differentially applied across the province. The proportionate reduction to the University of Alberta's funding was substantially higher than other post-secondary institutions in the province.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda Mover and Seconder: Waddingham/Padfield

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of September 23, 2020

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve the open session minutes of September 23, 2020.

CARRIED

ACTION ITEMS

4. Proposed Direct Entry from High School to the Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) Degree Program at Faculty of Business

Presenter(s): Joseph Doucet, Dean, Faculty of Business; Leo Wong, Associate Dean, Undergraduate, Faculty of Business

Discussion:

The Chair noted that the proposal had been recommended by the GFC Programs Committee and was before APC because of their authority to approve program changes which involve new space or resources or affect long-term planning. He also noted that there was an administrative process employed to balance University enrolment across Faculties and that APC was not responsible for the approval of the enrolment increases.

Dean Doucet spoke about the reasons to move to direct entry for the BCom program including:

- competitive post-secondary landscape;
- student experience;
- support from other Faculties; and
- fiscal sustainability and growth of the program.

Members discussed:

- strong support for the move to direct-entry;
- the benefits to recruitment;
- the impact on the bilingual business program;
- the strength of the cohort model;
- concerns with impact on moving Full Load Equivalent (FLEs) from other Faculties and the resulting impact on funding;
- the new budget model and the shift in the distribution of the Campus Alberta Grant;
- the composition of first year courses changing only with the addition of one business course;
- the impact on the number of professors in the Faculty of Business;
- how the transfer in and out of the program had been factored in to the projections;
- a question about where Business students currently transferred in from;
- that the expected demographic bulge would help maintain healthy enrolment in Arts and Science;
- the benefits to Indigenous and inclusive recruitment and retention;
- work with underrepresented groups and communities; and
- that the curriculum was being developed to encourage a more inclusive business acumen.

Motion: Erichsen/Xu

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee, with delegated authority from General Faculties Council, and as recommended by the GFC Programs Committee, approve the proposed changes to general program information and course sequencing for undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Business, as set forth in attachments 2, and 3 for publication in the 2021-2022 University Calendar.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5. Academic Restructuring

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

Discussion:

The Chair updated members on University of Alberta for Tomorrow (UAT) consultations to date and noted that this item would be on all APC agendas over the next several months. He gave a presentation and highlighted some of the main points and ideas that were coming from the consultations including:

- where different Faculties, Departments, and programs saw themselves fitting best into the scenarios;
- discussions around Arts and Science in scenario B;
- the importance of coordinating the strategic direction of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) while not losing the local EDI capacity;
- the importance of student services to the overall student experience;
- mechanisms for interdisciplinarity; and
- the interplay of Academic Restructuring and the Service Excellence Transformation (SET).

The Chair's presentation also provided some data requested by APC members in their September 23, 2020 meeting including student and staff satisfaction from several Australian institutions where academic restructuring had taken place and presented an overview of the SET Administrative Operating Overview.

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

- the perception that administrative autonomy for the Faculties was in jeopardy;
- the reliability of the data and potential conflicts of interest;
- that the data sources had been confirmed as being publicly available and credible sources;
- a request for additional information related to how the cost savings were calculated in the Interim Report including assumptions and methodology;
- that many of the details had yet to be worked out and that some decisions needed to be made before accurate cost savings could be calculated;
- that the process was not prescriptive but would be shaped in ways that made sense for our university and that there would be opportunity for change and growth beyond the initial decisions;
- that the outcome would be an institution that was more dynamic and able to make choices and changes that made sense in the future as well to meet the current budget challenges;
- that the scenarios as presented were not fixed but were ideas meant to drive discussion and help find the optimal final model;
- the potential impact of power differentials between academic and administrative leadership and questions on who would be designing the governance structures;
- concern that the result of restructuring would be less innovative programming and interdisciplinarity if the ability to make administrative decisions was taken away from the academic leaders;
- the division of the transactional duties such as recruitment, advertising, and ensuring funding is in place, from the academic duties such as program development, research and teaching;
- how disruptions of staff expected in November were related to the initial approval of the SET model by the Board of Governors; and
- that some position transition information related to consolidation of the university's Information Technology would become available over the next weeks but that the more significant changes across positions throughout the University would begin to happen in the New Year and the spring.

6. Budget Update - Standing Item (no documents)

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

Discussion:

The Chair noted the possibility of a "mini-budget" and in-year cuts by the province and confirmed there was no information available from the government to date.

7. Question Period

There were no questions.

INFORMATION REPORTS

8. Items Approved by GFC Academic Planning Committee by email ballots

There were no items.

9. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

10. Adjournment

- Next Meeting of APC: October 21, 2020
- Next Meeting of GFC: October 19, 2020

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.