



# UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

## UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

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General Faculties Council  
Academic Standards Committee  
Approved Open Session Minutes

Thursday, March 17, 2016  
2-31 South Academic Building (SAB)  
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

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### **ATTENDEES:**

#### Voting Members:

Nataraj (Nat) Kav	Chair (Delegate), Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Janice Causgrove Dunn	Vice-Chair, Dean or Delegate (Associate Dean, Undergraduate)
Fraser Brenneis	Member (Delegate), Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry
Dion Brocks	Member (Delegate), Dean, Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Faith Davis	Member (Delegate), Dean, School of Public Health
Fay Fletcher	Member (Delegate), Dean, Faculty of Extension
Elaine Geddes	Member (Delegate), Dean, Alberta School of Business
Clive Hickson	Member (Delegate), Dean, Faculty of Education
Scott Jeffrey	Member (Delegate), Dean, Agricultural Life and Environmental Sciences
Brenda Leskiw	Member (Delegate), Dean, Faculty of Science
Karsten Mundel	Member (Delegate), Dean, Augustana Faculty
Rebecca Nagel	Member (Delegate), Dean, Faculty of Arts
Carla Peck	Member, Academic Staff
Fahim Rahman	Member, Vice-President (Academic), Students' Union
Carolyn Ross	Member (Delegate), Dean, Faculty of Nursing
Natalie Sharpe	Member, Director of Student OmbudService
Sam Stowe	Member (Delegate), Vice-Provost and University Registrar
Harsh Thaker	Member, Graduate Students' Association Vice-President (Academic)
Kasia Tymczak	Member, Undergraduate Student at-Large (Elected by GFC)

#### Presenter(s):

Nataraj (Nat) Kav	Vice-Provost (Programs) and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee
Wade King	Safe Disclosure and Human Rights Advisor
Amy Dambrowitz	Strategic Development Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Heather Zwicker	Interim Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
Karsten Mundel	Associate Dean, Academic, Augustana Faculty
Kate Peters	Portfolio Initiatives Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Anne Bailey	Director, Internal Communications, University Relations

#### Staff:

Meg Brolley, Coordinator, GFC Academic Standards Committee  
Andrea Patrick, Scribe

### **OPENING SESSION**

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Mundel/Causgrove Dunn

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve the Agenda.

**CARRIED**

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of February 18, 2016

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Thaker/Rahman

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve the Minutes of February 18, 2016.

**CARRIED**

3. Comments from the Chair

The Chair reported that General Faculties Council (GFC) is reviewing its delegated authorities to its Standing Committees, and that the GFC Academic Standards Committee (ASC) has a fair bit of delegated authority. He stated that GFC ASC will discuss delegations at the April 21, 2016 meeting, including a review of the Terms of Reference.

The Chair reported that the Province will be reviewing Tuition Fee Regulations prior to their expiration, with an aim to update some of the current language within it as well as other revisions. He noted that a task force will be organized to review possible revisions; additional information will be emailed to members and the Chair invited members to provide feedback directly to him.

**ACTION ITEMS**

4. Items Deemed Minor/Editorial

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Discussion:*

There was no discussion.

Omnibus Motion: Jeffrey/Hickson

4A. Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry: Proposed changes to existing Academic Standing and Graduation, DDS Advanced Placement Program

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, with delegated authority from General Faculties Council, proposed changes to Existing Academic Standing and Graduation, DDS Advanced Placement Program, as submitted by the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry.

**CARRIED**

4B. Augustana Faculty: Proposed changes to existing Academic Standing Regulations

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, with delegated authority from General Faculties

Council, proposed changes to existing Academic Standing, as submitted by Augustana Faculty.

**CARRIED**

4C. Office of the Registrar: Proposed Approval of Transfer Credit for March 2016

THAT GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, with delegated authority from General Faculties Council, proposed approval of Transfer Credit for March 2016, as submitted by the Office of the Registrar.

**CARRIED**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

5. Dean's Honour List course loads and Accommodation

There were no documents.

*Presenter:* Wade King, Safe Disclosure and Human Rights Advisor

*Purpose of the Proposal:* For discussion and information.

*Discussion:*

The Chair noted that members had identified that this issue required additional discussion and clarification at a recent ASC meeting.

Mr King noted that this issue falls under the University's Duty to Accommodate Policy and Provincial law. He explained that, in cases where a student is accommodated to have less than a normal full course load, this load should be considered to be a full load for the accommodated student for purposes such as Dean's Honour List. He added that the situation is different for *bona fide* degree requirements. Some members noted that professional faculties may have constraints on completion times and external accreditation. Mr King noted that, if such requirements could not be accommodated, the Faculty must be able to support them as *bona fide* requirements

Members expressed concern with the identification of accommodation needs, as well as recurring periods of accommodation. Mr King, in response, explained that under the law, the University has a duty to review each situation individually and that there are processes in place to ensure that appropriate documentation is submitted. On that note, he cautioned that the Courts are moving away from how much information has to be provided and that there might come a time when there may be a need to identify ways to navigate this process with less information. A member expressed concern about how Faculties can manage accommodations noting that this would increase if there was less information provided. Mr King acknowledged the need to become more capability focused and to ensure balance between *bona fide* degree requirements and accommodation.

Members discussed using accumulated credits rather than a time limit such that a student's last \*30 could be considered. Mr King indicated his willingness to explore this idea, and several members supported the idea.

Mr King, upon invitation from the Chair, suggested that additional institutional policies are not required to address this issue, but that Faculties may need to develop or review their internal processes in terms of how to apply the duty to accommodate to processes and items within the University Calendar.

Mr Rahman, Dr Nagel, Ms Sharpe and Mr King agreed to partner to discuss this issue further and bring it back to the committee for further discussion.

6. Graduate Enrolment Report 2015/2016

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter:* Heather Zwicker, Interim Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

*Purpose of the Proposal:* For discussion and information.

*Discussion:*

Dr Zwicker provided members with a summary of the Report, noting that out of the 7500 graduate students, a third are doctoral students, and the rest Masters students. She pointed out a softening in doctoral enrolment, perhaps due to a decline in the professoriate. She explained that the graduate student body is comprised of a high percentage of international students and that this cohort of students are unevenly distributed across Faculties. She stated that as such, each Faculty has their own vulnerabilities in regards to international students. She explained that more could be done to attract and retain Indigenous and Métis students.

She reported that admission GPA has remained high and that time to completion is steady or declining. She explained that attrition rates are difficult to calculate because there are a variety of situations and life events which can factor in. She noted, however, that international students tend to complete their programs faster.

Members expressed thanks for the Report and engaged in discussion related to full and part-time status, graduate funding, and leave options for graduate students. A member suggested tracking online students, as it is a growing area with important implications for teaching load and resources.

7. Proposal for a new Scheduling Initiative for Augustana Faculty

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter:* Karsten Mundel, Associate Dean, Academic, Augustana Faculty

*Purpose of the Proposal:* To discuss a new scheduling initiative for Augustana Faculty.

*Discussion:*

Dr Mundel explained to members that this proposal has been an important priority for members at Augustana Faculty and that a significant amount of work has gone into its development. To summarize, he stated that the proposal intends to transform the 14 week term into one three week course followed by an 11 week session in which students could take four courses ("3-11" calendar). He added that it would allow Augustana Faculty to provide a more immersive learning experience and to link courses together. He also provided members with a summary of the Augustana First Year Experience, intended to help students transition into university life.

Members expressed support for this proposal, indicating that this type of creative endeavour should be encouraged across the academy. A member also commended Dr Mundel on the Augustana First Year Experience, noting that many students struggle to successfully transition into university.

Dr Mundel, in response to queries, confirmed that there was consultation with the Registrar's Office as well as the Peter Lougheed Leadership College.

8. Institutional Strategic Plan (ISP) - First Draft

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* Nataraj (Nat) Kav, Vice-Provost (Programs) and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee; Amy Dambrowitz, Strategic Development Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic); Anne Bailey, Director, Internal Communications, University Relations

*Purpose of the Proposal:* For discussion and feedback. Input will be used in the refinement of the new Institutional Strategic Plan (ISP).

*Discussion:*

Dr Bailey reported that following an extensive consultation process, members of the ISP Advisory Committee have prepared a draft document, which is now being presented across the academy for feedback.

Dr Dambrowitz explained that ISP will represent the institution's aspirations in one document, to guide academic and administrative decision-making, priorities and governance. She stated that the first round of consultation has ended and the project now enters Phase Two, which includes a review of the draft document. She reminded members that the ISP will be presented to the Board of Governors for approval on June 17, 2016.

In addition, Dr Dambrowitz acknowledged the feedback and suggestions previously offered by members of GFC ASC, and added that several ideas were incorporated into the draft document.

Dr Bailey reported that the draft is constructed around five verbs: Build, Experience, Excel, Engage, Sustain. She explained that the document is written in several layers, so that readers can peruse it in three minutes, read it in 30 minutes, or explore it in three hours. She also pointed out that the order of the five verbs is not an indication of priority.

During the lengthy discussion on this item, members expressed support for the title of the document and provided several comments and suggestions. A member expressed concern that emphasizing alignment with the Provincial Government may undermine academic freedom and institutional autonomy, and suggested using another word, such as "dialogue" in place of "alignment". A member identified concern with content in the draft ISP which seemingly supports the myth that Arts and Science degrees are not inherently valuable. A member noted that North Campus seemed to be missing in the document.

A member noted that her Faculty seems to be absent from the document altogether, as it is neither Arts, Science nor a professional program. A member stated that breadth in the document could also be interpreted as a way to separate and alienate. A member explained that the academy is more than just teaching and learning, and suggested that culture is important, and the fact that members of the community are inquisitive and brave in addressing certain subjects.

The Chair thanked the presenters for their discussion, and Dr Dambrowitz invited members to contribute any other feedback *via* email.

9. External Programs for Review and Programs in Progress on Campus: Standing Item

There were no documents.

*Presenter(s):* Nataraj (Nat) Kav, Vice-Provost (Programs) and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee; Kate Peters, Portfolio Initiatives Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

*Purpose of the Proposal:* For information and discussion.

*Discussion:*

Ms Peters provided members with an update in regards to proposals being considered by the Ministry of Advanced Education (AE):

To be Proposed to Government:

- Suspension proposal for Diploma in Dental Hygiene (after July 1, 2016)

Currently with AE undergoing System Coordination Review:

- (New) PBC Bridging to Canadian Physical Therapy Practice
- (New) PBC Indigenous Sport and Recreation
- (New) Major in Fashion Business Management in the Bachelor of Science
- Load Change to the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Sexual Health
- Suspension to Admission in the Adult Education Route of the Bachelor of Education
- (New) PhD in Indigenous Studies
- (New) University Certificate in Early Learning and Childhood Education
- (New) University Certificate in Digital Learning
- (New) University Certificate in Adolescent Literacy
- (New) Program Proposal for MSc in Urban and Regional Planning

Completed External Review:

- University of Calgary, Bachelor of Science, Mathematics

Referred to CAQC for Review:

- (New) PharmD Program

Sent back from the Ministry:

- (New) Program Proposal for MSc in Audiology

Recently Approved:

There were no items to report. On this topic, the Chair noted that the Ministry's silence on proposed items is concerning.

10. Question Period

A member sought clarification in regards to extra fees associated with alternate delivery of courses. The Chair, in response, acknowledged that this is an important issue and is being reviewed.

**INFORMATION REPORTS**

11. Items approved by GFC Academic Standards Committee by email (non-debatable)

There were no items.

12. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

**CLOSING SESSION**

13. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:55 a.m.