General Faculties Council
Committee on the Learning Environment
Approved Open Session Minutes

Wednesday, October 07, 2015
2-31 South Academic Building (SAB)
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Voting Members:

Sarah Forgie	Chair, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives)
Roger Graves	Member, Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning
Glen Loppnow	Member, Associate Dean or Associate Chair, Teaching and Learning (or equivalent)
Luis Fernando Marin	Member, Graduate Student at-Large
Fahim Rahman	Member, Vice-President (Academic), Students' Union
Jeff Rawlings	Member (Delegate), Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President of Information Technology
Norma Rodenburg	Member (Delegate), Vice-Provost and University Registrar or Delegate
Toni Samek	Member, Major Teaching Award Recipient, Staff Representative
Sarah Stahlke	Member, Academic staff member (Category A1.0)* and currently a member of GFC
Harsh Thaker	Member, Vice-President (Academic), Graduate Students' Association
Mani Vaidyanathan	Member, Academic Staff

Presenter(s):

Sarah Forgie	Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives) and Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)
Roger Graves	Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)
Adrian Sheppard	Director, Copyright Office

Staff:
Meg Brolley, Coordinator, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Rahman/Thacker

> THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Agenda
>
> **CARRIED**

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of September 2, 2015

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Stahlke/Loppnow

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Minutes of September 2, 2015
CARRIED

3.   Comments from the Chair

The Chair reviewed the ground rules under which the committee operated, and reminded the committee of applicable documents such as: the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the University of Alberta Confidentiality Agreement, and the Conflict of Interest Policy found in UAPPOL. Members were encouraged to speak with the Chair on items which they may have a perceived or overt conflict.

The Chair noted that the mandate of the committee "promotes an optimal learning environment". Terms of Reference of the Committee are available online.

There was an extensive discussion amongst the committee on how to approach the workplan for this year. The committee discussed what has worked in the past and what they would like to see for the coming year. Members made the following comments:

- a lot of issues/concerns are raised by the committee but there is never enough time to deal with all of them
- the committee should aim to work on fewer issues and concentrate on a few issues with more focus with the aim of accomplishment of a few objectives within the academic year
- maintain honest and respectful discussion
- there has been a lot of discussion without a lot of outcome
- committee should focus on a few things to take to a reasonable recommendation which can go forward
- provide a showcase of resources available to the university community
- connect across the institution, develop best practices
- on technology, understand what directions are and get infrastructure in place for really important items

The Chair summarized the discussion: the committee should do less and focus on accomplishment; continue to operate in an honest and respectful fashion; follow through to arrive at a conclusion to items; and be proactive to issues rather than reactive.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4.   Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) Update

There were no documents.

Presenter: Roger Graves, Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

Discussion: Dr Graves provided the following updates:
- An Open House is scheduled for October 15; it will include demonstrations of the new collaborative learning classroom.
- TLEF Professional Development applications; Dr Graves encouraged members, and colleagues, to apply for support to develop teaching skills.
- Research on Teaching and Learning page is posted.

- The Director's message, developed during the staff retreat, now speaks directly to instructors rather than administrators. It now begins: "*Teaching is the heart of the University of Alberta. It is the reason students join our educational community; it is the primary reason the government supports us financially; and it is the reason alumni remember us. At the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL), we work with instructors at all levels and in all disciplines to develop the best instruction possible.*"
- Website: Work is now ongoing on revisions to the website.

October Events: seven of them! Over 140 people attended the September events.

- ePortfolios in Post-Secondary Education - Oct 9, 2015 10:30 AM - 11:50 AM
- i>clicker Student Response System - Oct 9, 2015 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM
- Lost Exams, Body Odour, and Teaching Portfolios: The Challenge of Teaching Professionalism - Oct 13, 2015 10:30 AM - 11:50 AM
- Peer and Self Assessments - Oct 16, 2015 10:30 AM - 11:50 AM
- Stratégies d'enseignement pour l'apprentissage actif - Oct 19, 2015 10:30 AM - 11:50 AM
- Conceptions and Misconceptions of Teaching and Learning: Understand Your Teaching Beliefs and Their Relationship with Student Learning - Oct 21, 2015 10:30 AM - 11:50 AM
- Technology Tools to Support Reflective Practice - Oct 27, 2015 10:30 AM - 11:50 AM

5.   Discussion on Topics for 2015-2016 Committee Workplan

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Sarah Forgie, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives) and Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)

Discussion: A member suggested that topics could be framed as: what is the problem and what the committee could do about it. It was noted that the GFC CLE is an advisory body which provides recommendations to other committees. The committee discussed a wide range of potential topics. It was suggested that the committee should be looking ahead 5 to 10 years rather than just focusing on immediate issues. Comments from members included: looking at resources made available to support optimal teaching and learning - virtual, physical, philosophical; to date, topics have come from an historical trajectory; the committee should look at umbrella items like libraries; student learning as the focus for discussion.

A number of potential topics were discussed including:
- Classrooms – fundamental, widespread, base requirements are needed to teach well; revenue generation is part of the classroom discussion as some faculties can afford to equip spaces better than others; infrastructure of classrooms – this is expensive and needs to reflect teaching methods and how teachers/students use the rooms; what can we do versus what can we afford – determine baseline needs.
- eUSRI
- Online resources –online homework, managing formative assessment and the question of who is giving students feedback; etextbooks versus physical texbooks; how these resources constitue another level of technology in the classroom.
- Copyright
- Teaching Evaluation – possibly expand to graduate students – develop ideal/vision of UA learning environment trying to come up with aspirations/conditions building on historical context of the university; other items are tools

- Teaching stream – best practices at other institutions; caution was expressed regarding the complexity of this issue including labour market implications.
- The use of subcommittees as a way of getting broader representation, chaired by a committee member.
- Work on broader issues: vision, conditions, outcomes.
- Rights of students.
- Desired competencies
- Suggestion for members to come up with a specific topic, define question and scope, how it should be addressed (subcommittee, guest speaker, etc) and circulate by email to other members.

6.   Update on Copyright

There were no documents.

Presenter: Adrian Sheppard, Director, Copyright Office

Discussion: Mr Sheppard provided a summary of the current status of Access Copyright noting that the University will terminate this relationship as of December 31, 2015. He indicated that the impact should be relatively small. Access Copyright is a tool that has been used by the University to ensure compliance with the law. Due to changes in the copyright landscape and the ways in which materials are being used, it was thought that there a better and more cost effective ways to achieve this compliance.

Mr Sheppard noted a variety rules around use of materials available: open access materials, documents for which the Libraries already have a license, materials used for research and educational purposes which may not require a license from the publisher, and multimedia resources. He noted that copyright is involved in both with creation of, and the use and distribution of content.

The Copyright Office has been staffed to provide service to the community and instructors are encouraged to contact the Office with any questions. Mr Sheppard indicated that the process for instructors would be the same, but cautioned that more lead time might be required by the Copyright Office due to an increased volume of queries by instructors. By contacting copyright@ualberta.ca , enquiries will be directed to the most appropriate staff member for response.

7.   Question Period

There were no questions.

INFORMATION REPORTS

8.   Items Approved by the Committee by e-mail Ballots (non-debatable) – There were no items.

9.   Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings – There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

10. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting.