



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

Wednesday, October 31, 2018
2-31 South Academic Building (SAB)
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Sarah Forgie
Masoud Aliramezani
Dale Askey
Akanksha Bhatnagar
Janice Causgrove Dunn
Eva Lemaire
Brian Maraj
Norma Rodenburg

Jennifer Tupper
Mani Vaidyanathan
Janet Wesselius
Kevin Zentner

REGRETS:
Robert Desjardins
Janice Miller-Young

Jeff Rawlings
Stanley Varnhagen

STAFF:
Meg Brolley, Committee
Coordinator

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Causgrove Dunn/Aliramezani

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of October 3, 2018

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Maraj/Aliramezani

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the Open Session Minutes of October 3, 2018, as amended.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

The Chair had no comments.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. University of Alberta's submission to the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology (INDU) on the Statutory Review of the Copyright Act

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Adrian Sheppard, Director, Copyright Office

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the committee because the results of the ongoing review of the Copyright Act could lead to legislative changes that would have considerable impact on the university. This information item is to inform the committee of how the university is engaging in the review process to ensure its concerns are properly considered.

Discussion:

Mr Sheppard provided an overview of the ongoing review of the *Copyright Act* and implications for the university. He spoke to the draft submission from the university included with the agenda and commented on the consultation around it. A member asked a question about the calculation of full-time equivalent undergraduate and graduate student. There was no further discussion.

5. Experiential Learning (no documents)

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

Discussion:

Dr Forgie introduced the website for experiential learning (<https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students/experiential-learning>) designed to reflect the variety of options open to students. The committee discussed: a tiny url; the understanding and use of the term experiential learning; other terms to express this including beyond the classroom; inclusion of co-op and practicum opportunities; search engine optimization; undergraduate research opportunities; and overlap with graduate professional development.

ACTION ITEMS

6. Recommendation from COSA re: Requirement for use of long-form handwriting for examination purposes

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Katherine Zwicker, Manager, Student Affairs, Office of the Dean of Students; Rita Neyer, Graduate student and COSA member

Purpose of the Proposal: The Council on Student Affairs (COSA) recommends that the Committee on the Learning Environment investigate whether the use of long-form handwriting remains an appropriate assessment practice as students' communication competencies have shifted away from handwriting to typing and word processing and current technological trends suggest that the use of technological devices and software will only increase and accelerate.

Discussion:

The presenters gave an overview of the discussions that took place at COSA over a number of meetings and noted some of the issues raised including fairness and security concerns. They noted that COSA had more questions than answers on this issue and were looking toward CLE for further input.

The committee discussed: alignment of practices used in exams and assignments; digital marking; fairness; impact on instructor and teaching assistant workloads; technology adopted in the K-12 sector and the impact on post-secondary education; accessibility; assessing need; potential benefits specific to departments or courses; anxiety and mental health; hand writing as a learning tool; technology challenges with bring your own device; consideration of learning outcomes as students think differently online than by handwriting; students have differing opinions on the issue; may be an impediment for some international students less familiar with technology; does the assessment fit the outcomes of the course; and should CLE be looking at how students take exams.

The committee then discussed actions required of the committee. It was suggested that the Provost establish a group to develop a white paper on the issue. The Chair will follow up on this.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

7. Updates

A. Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) – no update

B. Information Technology – no update

C. Learning Services – Dr Askey provided the following update:

- applications for the second round of OER awards are now open
- OER Showcase is scheduled for December 6 and will include presentations by award winners
- the Digital Scholarship Centre was recently approved by the Academic Planning Committee
- Libraries are embarking on a review of discovery tools, there will be calls for input from the community

D. General Faculties Council – Dr Lemaire noted the following topics discussed at the October 22 meeting of GFC:

- update on cannabis
- early consultation on GFC University Teaching Awards Committee (UTAC) including a proposed increase in undergraduate student representation on the committee
- early consultation on the workplace impairment policy

E. Academic Success Centre – no update

8. Question Period

A question was raised about changing a course time and day at the beginning of term but before the first class, the committee discussed the obligations to ensure students could complete required courses.

INFORMATION REPORTS

9. Items Approved by the Committee by E-Mail Ballots (non-debatable)

There were no items.

10. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

11. The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 pm