



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

Wednesday, March 30, 2022
Remote Meeting by Zoom
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Hollis Lai, Vice-Chair
Ashmeen Aneja
Kathy Haddadkar
Abner Monteiro
Mary Olukotun
Christine Hughes
Gregory Thomas
Benjamin Cheung
Bora Kim

Angie Mandeville
Pierre Lemelin
Al Meldrum
Shauna Wilton
Angela Bayduza
non-voting:
Tommy Mayberry
Ben Louie (delegate)
Kate Peters

REGRETS:

John Nychka, Chair
Brad Hamdon
Mike MacGregor
Heather Richholt, Coordinator
Norma Rodenburg
Ali Shiri
Connie Winther

Staff:

Edyta McLoughlin

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Hollis Lai, Vice-Chair, Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)

Discussion:

Before opening the meeting, the Vice-Chair made the following territorial acknowledgement:

The University of Alberta resides on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. To acknowledge the territory is to recognize the longer history of these lands and signifies our commitment to working in Good Relations with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples as we engage in our institutional work.

Motion: Hughes/Cheung

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning environment approve the agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of January 26, 2022

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Hollis Lai, Vice-Chair, Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)

Motion: Wilton/Lemelin

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve the open session minutes of January 26, 2022

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

Presenter(s): Hollis Lai, Vice-Chair, Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)

Discussion:

The Vice-Chair noted that the Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy Suite had been approved by the Board of Governors at their March 25, 2022 meeting and thanked members for their feedback and input into its development. He reminded members that as set out in the policy, the Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy Appendix A: Student Perspectives of Teaching (SPOT) Survey questions would be coming back to CLE, who according to the procedure hold delegated authority to approve, but that there was a commitment to bring the new questions to GFC. He also read a statement prepared by the Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives) John Nychka to update CLE members on the work to revise SPOT questions:

- The existing Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) questions modelled onto the new format with slight changes incorporated (ie: individual comment fields instead of one "catch-all"; and the prefacing statement included) were approved as a part of the new policy suite.
- The Centre for Research in Applied Measurement and Evaluation (CRAME) with the Department of Education Psychology in the Faculty of Education, will work in an advisory capacity to GFC CLE on a validation study for the SPOT survey instrument in relation to the Framework for Effective Teaching and Learning. Professors Lia Daniels and Okan Bulut have agreed to lead this work within CRAME and Test Scoring & Questionnaire Services (TSQS).

The Vice-Chair then opened the floor and members asked for confirmation about the format of the SPOT questions using the existing USRI questions, whether they would include individualised comments, and when they would be implemented. Specifically, members asked if the July 1, 2022 implementation date meant that summer courses would use the new SPOT question format.

The Vice-Chair then asked K Peters, the Secretary to General Faculties Council (GFC) to provide an update on upcoming membership vacancies.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. Updates

A. Centre for Teaching and Learning

Presenter(s): Tommy Mayberry, Executive Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

Discussion:

T Mayberry noted that the Festival of Teaching and Learning will take place May 3-5, 2022 and shared the registration link. He noted that the steering committee had done some innovation with the idea of a keynote speaker and that students will be presenting on accommodation and interactive design. The central theme for the Conference is post-pandemic pedagogy and will foreground student voices. T Mayberry also shared that there had been a new appointment of Online and Hybrid Strategy Coordinator and that CTL would soon announce the appointment of a Digital Pedagogies and Writing across the Curriculum position and that the search for an Indigenous Portfolio leader was ongoing.

There were no questions.

B. Facilities and Operations

Presenter(s): Ben Louie, University Architect, Facilities & Operations

Discussion:

B Louie provided an update on the Space Inventory work and committed to bring more information when it was available.

There were no questions.

C. Information Technology

Presenter(s): Mike MacGregor, Associate Vice-President and Chief Information Officer, University Services and Finance

The item was deferred.

D. Library and Museums

Presenter(s): Angie Mandeville, Head, Information Services & User Engagement

Discussion:

A Mandeville noted that the library is moving forward with the creation of a space for students who parent in Rutherford library on the third floor. This initiative was identified in the Library Strategic plan and in consultation with students and the Office of the Dean of Students.

There were no questions.

E. General Faculties Council

Presenter(s): Kate Peters, GFC Secretary and Manager, GFC Services

Discussion:

K Peters shared that the GFC Meeting Procedural Rules and Guiding documents had recently been revised by GFC and that the Explorations Credits Proposal had been approved.

Members asked about the Exploration credits proposal and expressed a hope that all admissions committees would be asked to think about exploration credits and integrate them into their course requirements.

5. Proposed Changes to the Terms of Reference for the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment

Presenter(s): Kate Peters, Secretary to GFC and Manager, GFC Services

Purpose of the Proposal: To discuss the addition of delegated authority from the Board of Governors to the Committee on the Learning Environment to enable the proposed disbanding of the GFC Facilities Development Committee (FDC).

Discussion:

The Vice-Chair noted that the proposed changes were included in the package and invited members to comment on them. K Peters noted that the rationale for disbanding FDC was a lack of business and that over half of the scheduled meetings had been cancelled in the past five years. It was emphasized that the proposed changes will simply transfer the authority currently held by FDC to the Academic Planning Committee (APC) and CLE and that future work would be required to review the language. It was proposed that as a part of the review of the CLE terms of reference in Fall 2022, the new authority should be reviewed and the language should be clarified as required.

Members discussed what expertise would be necessary to review the proposals and noted that, while members may not have the expertise on facilities and space, they do understand the learning environment, delivery of academic programs, and research. They asked whether it would be appropriate to add other resource members

or if the existing membership of CLE was sufficient. The University Architect, Ben Louie, spoke to their role on FDC, and that noted they often act as a resource to the Chair and that they could be invited to be present during any discussions or decision-making by CLE.

Members discussed routing for approval and asked what would happen if CLE chose not to approve a proposal. They also confirmed that CLE would not be asked to approve a project whose funding had not received Board approval.

Members also discussed the importance of student consultation and that information should be gathered on how the project would impact student success early on.

A member asked why CLE was not being asked to recommend approval of the changes and the Vice-Chair noted that the Executive Committee holds delegated authority to recommend approval of changes to GFC Standing Committee terms of reference and that GFC holds the authority to approve the proposal.

6. Question Period

Presenter(s): Hollis Lai, Vice-Chair, Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)

Discussion:

Members discussed the approval of the Teaching policy and timelines for changes to the SPOT survey questions. It was noted that during the approval of the proposal at GFC on February 28, members had serious concerns about the use of the existing USRI questions. The Vice-Chair noted that some of the concerns were related to faculty evaluation which was beyond the scope of the teaching policy and that every Faculty has their own process for the evaluation of faculty members. Concerning the development of new questions, the Vice-Chair noted that this is a work in progress and that there are a lot of circumstances to work through, including the context of individual learning environments. Members asked if students would be involved in the process to develop questions.

CLOSING SESSION

7. Adjournment

- Next meeting of CLE: April 27, 2022
- Next meeting of GFC: May 2, 2022

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:07 p.m.