



# UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

## UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council  
Council on Students Affairs  
Approved Open Session Minutes

Thursday, March 03, 2022  
Hybrid Meeting in SAB 2-31 and by Zoom  
4:00 PM - 5:20 PM

---

### ATTENDEES:

Steven Dew, Chair  
Ghalia Aamer  
Chiara Concini  
Devin Doherty  
Anastasia Elias  
Kevin Friese (for Dean of Students)  
Kathy Haddakar  
Keith King  
Mohit Kumar  
Jesse Lafontaine

Rowan Ley  
Maggie Lin  
Melissa Padfield  
Chanpreet Singh  
Cindy Sun  
Alan Underhill  
Adrian Wattamaniuk  
non-voting  
Kate Peters

### REGRETS

Brad Hamdon  
Maddie Dempsey  
Helen Vallianatos

### OPENING SESSION

Before opening the meeting the Chair read the following territorial recognition:

*The University of Alberta resides on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. This territory is a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples whose histories, languages and cultures continue to influence our community. To acknowledge the territory is to recognize the longer history of these lands. The acknowledgement signifies our commitment to working in Good Relations with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples as we engage in our institutional work, uplifting the whole people, for the University for Tomorrow.*

The Chair also acknowledged the conflict in Ukraine and encouraged members to reach out to supports available in the University.

#### 1 Approval of the Agenda

*Presenter(s)*: Steven Dew, Council on Student Affairs (COSA) Chair, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

#### *Discussion:*

The Chair thanked members for joining both on Zoom and in person and noted the revised protocols for the meeting.

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the Council on Student Affairs approve the Open Session agenda of March 3, 2022.

**CARRIED.**

2. Approval of the open session minutes of January 13, 2021

*Presenter(s):* Steven Dew, COSA Chair, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the Council on Student Affairs approve the Open Session minutes of November 4, 2021.

**CARRIED.**

3. Comments from the Chair - Return to Campus - Replenishment of COSA

*Presenter(s):* Steven Dew, COSA Chair, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

*Discussion:*

The Chair informed members about the recent provincial budget announcement targeted funding in select programs for up to 7,000 seats starting in September 2022. The Chair informed members about the government approval of exceptional tuition increases and provided an update on the Investment Management Agreement and the performance based funding targets provided by government.

The Chair asked Melissa Padfield, Vice-Provost and University Registrar and member of the Public Health Response Team (PHRT) to provide an update on the return to Campus since February 28<sup>th</sup>. M Padfield informed members about course modality, changes to the vaccine directive and the overall smooth transition.

Members asked questions on the new funding for targeted enrolment growth program and how it would be implemented and asked for information on the University's plans for the mask mandate.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

4. Exploration Credits

*Presenter(s):* Melissa Padfield, Vice-Provost and Registrar, Office of the Registrar; Rowan Ley, President, UA Students' Union, Students' Union, University of Alberta

*Discussion:*

The Chair reminded members that they had seen this proposal in the fall and informed them that this was the last discussion before the proposal would be put before GFC for decision. The proponents emphasized the value of students being able to experiment with courses beyond their discipline and spoke to consultation feedback gathered throughout the process.

Members affirmed the value of the proposal and expressed a hope that faculties would opt in to the program to give students these opportunities. They asked when the faculties would need to signal their intention to participate, how transfer credits would be managed, and how students would be informed about the impacts of using exploration credits on their progression.

5. Indigenous Institutional Strategic Plan (IISP)

*Presenter(s):* Florence Glanfield, Vice-Provost (Indigenous Programming & Research)

*Discussion:*

F Glanfield asked members of the committee to comment specifically on the aspects of the IISP that would have an impact on students and the student experience. She explained the steps that had been taken to consult with different groups and the plan to bring the IISP for approval in the coming months.

Members asked about the anti-racism training for post-doctoral fellows, faculty and staff, the accountabilities of Deans and College Deans, and whether targeted education for International students was being contemplated.

The Provost added that under the EDI strategy approved in 2018 there is a required annual reporting mechanism that will be used as a Framework to add specific metrics or indicators that may be set out in the IISP.

Members discussed the institutional and individual affirmation that would accompany the final proposal and the value of having a commitment included with the plan.

6. Health and Wellness Surveys (no documents)

*Presenter(s):* Kevin Friese, Assistant Dean, Health and Wellness, Office of the Dean of Students

*Discussion:*

K Friese noted that there was a need for additional data on the health and wellness of students and that to present, there are only smaller or micro-level methods used for collection. COSA was informed a new survey will be implemented in the University of Alberta in the coming year with survey topics such as mental health, exercise, food security, addictions, and substance abuse. The survey will run for two consecutive years to account for outlier data based on the experience of students during the COVID pandemic. The data will be used to inform decisions on programming and to provide a clearer overview of the student perspective over time.

Committee members asked about health and wellness services and uptake across the University which has increased since the early months of the pandemic with the support of partnerships with student groups. COSA members discussed the significant rise in use of mental health services and counselling and community health supports across the University.

7. Introduction to the Sexual Violence Response Coordinator (no documents)

*Presenter(s):* Deborah Eerkes, Acting Sexual Violence Response Coordinator; University of Alberta

*Discussion:* The Chair invited the newly appointed Sexual Violence Response Coordinator, Deb Eerkes, to present on her plans as she integrates into her role. She began by thanking the students for their work to advocate for this role to be created. D Eerkes noted her background at the University and the scope of work on revisions to the Sexual Violence Policy suite. She asked the committee for support on strategy and the need to shift away from a punitive approach towards an equity orientation, grounded in the academic mission of the University.

Members asked about the timelines for development of the strategy and how students would be involved.

8. Question Period

*Presenter(s):* Steven Dew, COSA Chair, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

*Discussion:*

Members asked about plans to revise the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction questions and how the concerns expressed by General Faculties Council members will be addressed and whether the questions would come back to COSA for discussion and approval.

9. Updates (no documents)

A. Students' Union

*Presenter(s):* Rowan Ley, President, UA Students' Union

*Discussion:*

R Ley informed COSA members about a rally organized for students from Ukraine or with Ukrainian heritage, the work on the Myer Horowitz theater, and about changes to the UPass. He reported that in response to the concerns raised by students regarding their online learning experience, the SU was working with the University to meet the students' needs. R Ley repeated the concerns about the Exceptional Tuition proposals and the work that SU is doing to inquire into the development of the proposal.

B. Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

*Presenter(s):* Kathy Haddadkar, Vice-President (Academic), Graduate Students' Association

*Discussion:*

The GSA election has completed and the new executives will be announced in the coming weeks. The GSA is also releasing a statement on the situation in Ukraine and is working on a guaranteed funding proposal that will likely be a multi-year initiative to ensure that graduate students have a minimum guaranteed level of funding.

C. Office of the Dean of Students- Student Accommodations

*Presenter(s):* Kevin Friese, Assistant Dean, Health and Wellness, Office of the Dean of Students

*Discussion:*

K Friese noted that he was looking for feedback to inform the process on accommodations in response to the challenges that students have faced during the pandemic. He spoke to the work done by the Office of the Dean of Students to meet the needs of students requiring accommodations in the current learning environment. The work of the Office includes supports for students and recognition that this is a shared environment. He noted that Allen Ball had been appointed as a Provost Fellow to review the accommodations process and he will be collecting information to identify where the gaps exist and some of the opportunities in a report.

Members noted that the note taking service continues to be an issue and K Friese committed to bringing the report back to COSA once finalized.

10. Closing the loop - COSA 2021-2022 (no documents)

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

*Discussion:*

K Peters thanked members for their work over the 2021-2022 academic year and asked members to review the COSA terms of reference. In particular, members discussed the possibility that a proportion of student members on COSA could be optionally members of GFC. Rationale for making this change was discussed including the need to respect the workload of student members of GFC, the approach to composition of student members on GFC Standing committees more generally, and the need to ensure that student representatives are balanced.

COSA then discussed meeting format and K Peters asked for feedback on the hybrid meeting format. Members discussed the need for a discussion on principles for meeting format for GFC and its standing committees and that the University was an in-person institution. Students related the desire to have some options for example to accommodate students who are on field placements to ensure inclusivity of student members while allowing them to meet their academic obligations.

**CLOSING SESSION**

11. Adjournment
  - Next meeting: September 15, 2022
  - Next meeting of GFC: March 21, 2022