



The following Motions and Documents were considered by the GFC Council on Student Affairs at its Thursday, November 2, 2023 meeting:

Agenda Title: **Student Experience Action Plan**

CARRIED MOTION:

THAT the GFC Council on Student Affairs endorse the Student Experience Action Plan Themes and Goals and key actions, as described in attachments.

FINAL Item 5



Decision Discussion Information

ITEM OBJECTIVE: To share the Student Experience Action Plan- themes, goals, and key actions with the General Faculties Council for discussion and endorsement.

DATE	November 20, 2023
TO	Council on Student Affairs
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO	Provost and Vice-President (Academic) Project Co-Sponsors are the Students’ Union, Graduate Students’ Association, the Deputy Provost, Students & Enrollment, and the Associate Dean, Education, the Alberta School of Business

MOTION: THAT the GFC Council on Student Affairs endorse the Student Experience Action Plan Themes and Goals and key actions, as described in attachments.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Background

Since January 2023, the Student Experience Action Plan (SEAP) has engaged deeply (over 100 engagements, including a student validation survey with over 8000 responses) with U of A students, staff, and faculty to understand what aspects of student experiences are exceptional and where we need to improve, as our student enrollment grows to 60,000. Guided by a joint sponsorship model with representation from the Students’ Union, the Graduate Students’ Association, the Deputy Provost, Students and Enrollment, and Faculty, the SEAP used co-creation to engage with our communities to listen and uplift the voices and aspirations of our diverse student body. The SEAP co-created a set of student-centered principles, a set of commitment statements, and 54 actions that are nested within seven thematic areas. As an action plan, the SEAP will operationalize and deliver on the University Strategic Plan’s commitments outlined in *Education with Purpose*. The SEAP and its accountability framework highlight concrete actions and an increased level of intentionality that will ensure the U of A is embedding student experience data and student voices. Through the SEAP students will have a rich environment in which to shape their time at the U of A and next steps after graduation.

Throughout the co-creation process we have relied on a number of principles to inform our approach: inclusion and diversity, iterative process with open minds, transparency, honesty, and respect, shared accountability, and visible learning.

The SEAP is a “living plan” and the plan’s launch will kick off “living implementation” which recognizes that as student-needs evolve, the SEAP will need to be responsive and we will iterate as needed. The commitment to creating the SEAP is a commitment to both current and future U of A students.

Next Steps

GOVERNANCE OUTLINE



Following endorsement the SEAP will finalize the accountability framework and plan for implementation, after its formal launch in January 2024.

Supporting Materials:

[Student Experience Action Plan Overview](#)

[Student Experience Action Plan Appendix - summary of goals and actions](#)

***See Schedule A for additional items to include if needed.**

SCHEDULE A:

Engagement and Routing

Consultation and Stakeholder Participation / Approval Route (parties who have seen the proposal and in what capacity) <[Governance Resources Section Student Participation Protocol](#)>

Those who are actively participating:

- Between January and September 2023 the SEAP has held over 100 engagement sessions to co-create the action plan. These engagements include:
 - 36 student and student group engagements
 - 35 Faculty and staff engagements
 - 7 Meetings with University Governance
 - 20 meetings with units to develop goals and actions
 - 2 Engagements with alumni and admitted students
 - 1 Talking Circle with Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Colour
 - 3 Co-creation Workshops
 - 4 SEAP Support Team Meetings (this committee is comprised of students, student representatives, faculty members, staff, and senior leaders)
 - 10 student Advisory Committee engagements
 - 1 Senior Leadership retreat

Those who have been consulted:

- Student Service Staff survey
- Faculty member feedback form
- Student validation survey (8,092 responses, 19% response rate)
- Group visits - Faculty councils, Deans' councils, student meetings, etc.
- Open shareback sessions
- Statutory Deans' Council - November 1, 2023



*Those who have been **informed**:*



Governance Route:

COSA - November 2, 2023 - for endorsement
GFC - November 20th, 2023 - for endorsement
BLRSEC - November 24, 2023 - for discussion

Supplementary Notes / Context:

Goals	Actions	Key Indicators	Source	Accountable	Contributor	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Work to eliminate discriminatory barriers to create accessible and responsive environments where all students can meaningfully participate.	Implement the recommendations in the Student Accessibility Assessment Project, collaborating with the Council on Systemic Ableism, to remove discriminatory barriers from all U of A learning environments.			VPEDI, F&O, VPDoS, DPSE, SU	FGPS			
	Improve the student accommodation process by embedding the responsibility of accessibility and accommodation into all levels of the organization and clearly articulate a strong understanding of the roles and responsibilities for instructors, students and staff.	1. Percentage of students who accessed accommodations who felt: 1) their learning needs were met, 2) that they felt safe throughout the accommodation process 2. Percentage of Instructors who felt equipped to support students with accommodations 3. Percentage of Instructors who felt their future course delivery will evolve as a result of engaging with student accommodations	New SX survey	VPEDI, VPDoS, Instructors	Ombuds, FGPS			
Support learning and participation for all students by maintaining consistent care, cleanliness and renovation of buildings, furniture and outdoor spaces prioritizing accessibility, sustainability and functionality.	Increase the awareness and availability of flexible spaces that students can use to meet their various needs (e.g., lactation spaces, practice their faith, etc.).	1. Student satisfaction with campus spaces that meet their various needs 2. Library seating capacity	1. New SX survey 2. Libraries	F&O, VPER, SU, VPEDI, VPCL	Deans, SU, GSA, FGPS		X	
	Seek new institutional funding to raise the University's Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA) standard of cleanliness from level 4 to level 3 or higher (across the board) by 2025.	1. Number of maintenance requests and completion timelines 2. Student satisfaction with the care and cleanliness of campus facilities and spaces	F&O	F&O				
Commit to a community-centered and equity-informed approach to improving safety for all students on all campuses.	Situate student voices and experiences in the implementation of all safety initiatives by implementing the key actions of the University of Alberta Safety and Security Committee's 2023 Security Report that is guided by a holistic approach to security and public safety.	1. Percentage of students who feel safe on campus, including physical, emotional, and cultural safety 2. Percentage of students who feel able to improve safety through ongoing engagement	1. Campus Security survey, UAPS 2. New SX survey	F&O, UAPS, VPEDI	community responsibility	X		
	Take holistic, complementary and multi-pronged approaches to improve safety and security, including:							
	a) Recognize the critical link between safety and relationships, connection and belonging by incorporating relational pathways (i.e. regular listening circles) that create conditions for a supportive and vibrant learning environment.				VPEDI, VPDoS, FGPS		X	

Goals	Actions	Key Indicators	Source	Accountable	Contributor	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
	b) Support initiatives under the Culture of Care that acknowledge the interconnectedness of students, faculty and staff in creating a safe workplace that leads to a safe learning environment for students.			FGPS, VPEDI			X	

STUDENTS TOLD US WHAT MATTERS TO THEM

Student-Centered Themes

We recognize that within these goals, student experiences vary, and for some students, exceptional experiences are only attained after systemic barriers to equity are addressed. These aspirational goals reflect the areas of the student experience that require focus as student enrollment grows. The enablers and key actions are the specific projects and initiatives that will enhance student experiences and help to deliver on the student vision, commitment statement and the Indigenous Worldview statement that anchor the Student Experience Action Plan.

Theme #1: Creating Safe, Accessible and Beautiful Campuses

The U of A should be a leader in accessibility. Students’ unique recreational, emotional, spiritual and educational needs must be considered in order for them to achieve physical, psychological and cultural safety and reach their full potential. This includes clean, accessible spaces and learning environments on all campuses, in addition to accommodations that remove barriers.				
Goals	Enablers/Key Actions	2023-24 ¹	2024-25	2025-26
Work to eliminate discriminatory barriers to create accessible and responsive environments where all students can meaningfully participate.	1. Implement recommendations to address student accessibility arising from work of the Council on Systemic Ableism to remove discriminatory barriers from all U of A learning environments.	X		
	2. Improve the student accommodation process by embedding the responsibility of accessibility and accommodation into all levels of the organization and clearly articulate a strong understanding of the roles and responsibilities for instructors, students and staff.	X		
Support learning and participation for all students by maintaining consistent care,	3. Increase the awareness and availability of flexible spaces that students can use to meet their various needs (e.g.,		X	

¹ The timeline indicates when the project or initiative begins. Actions that are aligned with the 2023-24 academic year are already underway.

cleanliness and renovation of buildings, furniture and outdoor spaces prioritizing accessibility, sustainability and functionality.	spaces to breastfeed, practice their faith, etc.).			
	4. Seek new institutional funding to raise the University's Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA) standard of cleanliness from level 4 to level 3 or higher (ATB) by 2025.		X	
Commit to a community-centered and equity-informed approach to improving safety for all students on all campuses.	5. Situate student voices and experiences in the implementation of all safety initiatives by implementing the key actions of the University of Alberta Safety and Security Committee's 2023 Security Report that is guided by a holistic approach to security and public safety.	X		
	6. Take holistic, complementary and multi-pronged approaches to improve safety and security, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recognize the critical link between safety and relationships, connection and belonging by incorporating relational pathways (i.e. regular listening circles) that create conditions for a supportive and vibrant learning environment. b. Support initiatives under the Culture of Care that acknowledge the interconnectedness of students, faculty and staff in creating a safe workplace that leads to a safe learning environment for students. 	X		

Theme #2: Enabling Academic Agency and Flexibility

Flexible learning environments are increasingly valuable for students. By providing opportunities for students to exercise more agency in their learning journey, the university can demonstrate it hears, understands and supports the needs of the modern student. Students also want proactive academic advising in order to make informed decisions, streamline their academic journey and facilitate the alignment of their varied academic and personal goals.				
Goals	Enablers/Key Actions	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Encourage students with proactive, holistic advising to facilitate their academic journey and pursuit of individual goals.	Implement a tool (“My Schedule Builder”) that will support students to more easily build class schedules that align with program requirements and balance their co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.	X		
	Implement a syllabus management tool that will ensure syllabi are provided in a consistent way and format to effectively communicate course expectations, learning objectives, assignments, and deadlines to students. Additionally, ensure that students have access to past syllabi prior to registration to aid in their decision making.		X	
	Proactively provide students with information regarding their program and degree requirements in a way that is easily understandable and accessible.	X		
Excel in experiential learning, including robust research opportunities, by partnering with communities to expand safe, accessible and supported opportunities for student participation.	Promote experiential learning (EL) opportunities through central structures (e.g., Go Abroad, Undergraduate Research Initiative, Career Centre) and unit-specific activities (faculty-specific work, integrated learning), and provide support for students to understand the benefits and pathways to integrating EL into their academic program.		X	
	Increase awareness and usage of the online platform (campusBRIDGE) for students and alumni to access work and	X		

	experiential learning opportunities.			
	Continue to improve upon the provision of research opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students in alignment with the Institutional Strategic Plan for Research and Innovation to foster scholarly skill development relevant to multiple disciplines.	X		
Support and increase students' agency to design and direct their learning by providing various academic programming and scheduling options within a responsive learning environment.	Establish shared definitions to distinguish the various delivery modes for online learning, empowering students to make informed scheduling decisions.	X		
	Complement in-person learning with online purpose-built learning delivered in bichronous, asynchronous, synchronous, and blended/hybrid modalities to enable mixed-modality scheduling to support student flexibility and agency.	X		
	Develop and expand purpose-built online course and program options that provide new learning opportunities to current and future students.	X		
	Audit and uplift existing online courses to focus on best practices in online learning pedagogy and accessibility.	X		
	Implement a renewed learning management system (LMS) to support on-campus and online learning.	X		
	Increase awareness of and access to flexible space on campus that is suitable for online learning.			X

Theme #3: Fostering a Student-Centered Learning Environment

To meet the evolving needs of students, we must put them at the heart of all we do. This includes prioritizing exceptional student experiences, encouraging a culture of learning and development and using the most current student experience data available to guide decision-making across the institution.

Goals	Enablers/Key Actions	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Celebrate a student-centered culture that listens to students as members of the community and prioritizes exceptional student experiences at all levels of the university.	Strive to maximize diverse student participation, feedback and experiences in all programs, services and initiatives that impact students.	X		
	Intentionally design and choose methods of student consultation that invite the highest level of participation possible.		X	
	Prioritize a student-centered approach to how we organize and communicate information on all platforms (e.g., websites, Bear Tracks, eClass, etc.).	X		
Encourage a culture of learning and development that educates staff and faculty in ways that continually enhances their ability to create conditions where students can foster connections, engage in opportunities for exploration and be successful in addressing challenges.	Offer and promote regular and accessible professional development and training opportunities for staff and faculty that enhance education and understanding around unique student experiences, future-focused programs and services and healthy workplace cultures.	X		
	Offer regular opportunities for staff and faculty to learn about the different programs and services within the student services ecosystem that also foster relationships across units and ensure exceptional service to students.	X		
	Intentionally highlight and celebrate contributions and successes that enhance students' experiences (e.g., awards, profiling initiatives, etc.).		X	
Commit to a culture that is informed by different types of student experience data	Establish clear student experience performance indicators and develop an assessment approach that focus on the top drivers of		X	

that guides decisions and ongoing improvements to student programs, services and resources.	positive student experiences, informed by current data and understandings of multiple student experiences. Develop clear accountabilities for this work.			
	Engage in integrated enrolment planning to develop a roadmap that thoughtfully considers and guides how student programs and services are scaled to respond to the enrolment growth targets of 60,000 students by 2033.	X		
	Establish a “one university” approach to sharing the student experience-related enhancement initiatives that are planned and executed throughout the university.		X	

Theme #4: Prioritizing Student Success

Students deserve a seamless and intuitive experience to locate, learn and access student support services regardless of their experience in higher education or previous knowledge. This includes mental health supports tailored to the unique context and needs of each student. Putting students’ holistic wellbeing front and center today sets them up for personal, academic and professional success tomorrow.

Goals	Enablers/Key Actions	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Nurture a learning environment that uplifts, cares for and empowers students and considers their unique context and needs where balance, health and well-being are prioritized.	Implement the recommendations and actions identified in the U of A's Action Plan for the National Standard for Mental Health and Well-Being for Post-Secondary Students.	X		
	Improve availability and access to a continuum of mental health and wellness supports that are diverse and culturally appropriate.	X		
	Invest in Counselling and Clinical Services to enhance access for all students by increasing the number of clinicians along with the adoption of a new stepped care model.	X		
	Implement the Inkblot Student Assistance Program at Augustana to provide students with access to a wide range of mental health practitioners.	X		

	Ensure all student support services are accessible and approachable through a transparent process of continuous improvement.		X	
Provide seamless and intuitive resources so all students, regardless of their previous knowledge or experience with higher education, can easily access and navigate the information and services they need.	Improve communications (specifically webpages) to ensure optimal accessibility, accuracy and navigability of student-related information.		X	
	Ensure “How To Help” resources for faculty and staff are proactively provided and available.		X	
Ensure student’s academic interests and challenges are supported by all members of the university community, fostering agency and responsibility in them.	Increase awareness and access to academic support services for all students.	X		

Theme #5: Relationships, Connection and Belonging Matter

The U of A has an incredible community spirit and solid foundation on which to build even more impactful opportunities for students to experience a strong sense of belonging. By intentionally investing in initiatives that foster community, we will provide opportunities for students to feel at home and flourish.

Goals	Enablers/Key Actions	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Strive to provide an abundance of diverse curricular and extracurricular opportunities for students to meaningfully connect with members of the university community, along with local and global communities.	Host regular, broadly inclusive events that facilitate inter-campus connection.		X	
	Continue to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of all events by developing university-wide strategies to support events at local and institutional levels.		X	
	Promote small to medium sized opportunities that facilitate meaningful connections for students to connect with peers and faculty members (instructors) both within their program/faculty as well as across disciplines.	X		

	Support student clubs in meaningful and tangible ways.		X	
	Streamline student group administration by transitioning student administrative processes, including the review of proposed events, from the university to the Students' Union.		X	
	Ensure all students have the opportunity for an international experience during their university journey.	X		
Develop welcoming services, facilities and engaging events that create a sense of enjoyment on campus, where students can interact, build meaningful relationships and foster a close-knit and lively on-campus community.	Continue building connections between all campuses, keeping in mind the unique needs of Campus Saint-Jean and Augustana students.	X		
	Explore ways to address the transportation gap for students traveling between Camrose and Edmonton.		X	

Theme #6: Supporting Transitions Into and Out of Study

Students ask the U of A to deliver wrap-around services that support their skills, knowledge, experiences and connections as they confidently transition into university and manage their careers upon graduation. They need to be informed about the decisions they are making, fully understanding each choice along their academic journey through to graduation.

Goals	Enablers/Key Actions	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Empower students to develop the skills, knowledge, experiences and connections they need to confidently manage their next steps after university, future academic goals and careers.	Establish a more robust "one university" approach to improve coordination, access to, and availability of career management services for all students.	X		
Create opportunities for all prospective and incoming students to connect with the university to learn more about how best to	Develop a "one university" orientation experience that integrates existing and specialized orientation and transition programming within a holistic curriculum to support student success.		X	

prepare for their student experience at the U of A based on their individual needs.				
Increase the degree to which students feel connected to the U of A by cultivating an environment that fosters a sense of belonging for all students from admission to graduation.	Develop new and enhance existing strategies to foster a sense of connection for students in the first six to nine weeks of their university journey that reflect evidence-informed best practice.		X	
	Establish strategies to support post-secondary transfer students and U of A students transitioning between years of study, including the progression from undergraduate to graduate studies.			X
	Establish strategies to support student transition to improve retention, academic achievement, academic success, student engagement and career success, considering the specific needs of equity-denied students.	X		

Theme #7: The Importance of Transparent and Affordable Costs

The university needs to be transparent about how they are using money from students' tuition and fees to demonstrate that post-secondary education at the U of A is a valuable investment. Students want to feel more considered, informed and part of the financial decisions the university is making.

Goals	Enablers/Key Actions	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Increase transparency of the breakdown and utilization of student tuition and fees to illustrate the value of students' investment in education.	Increase transparency of the breakdown of student tuition and fees by proactively communicating the information to students and stakeholders.	X		
Continue to practice responsible and effective stewardship of financial resources across the university in ways that prioritize student success.	Ensure the ongoing review of budgets to find ways to optimize the cost of student tuition and fees.	X		
	Develop and take actions to increase the affordability of class materials, including aiming to increase textbook affordability by	X		



	having 35% of courses and class sections utilize the Zero Textbook Cost initiative by 2026.			
	Make financial literacy support and programming available to all students.		X	

Lengend:

AVP&CIOIST	Associate Vice President and Chief Information Officer, Information Services and Tech
AVPOCE	Associate Vice President Online and Continuing Education
AVPSE	Associate Vice President, Student Experience
CBIE	Canadian Bureau for International Education (survey)
CCR	Campus and Community Recreation
CGPSS	Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey
CoSA	Council on Systemic Ableism
CTL	Centre for Teaching and Learning
DPSE	Deputy Provost Students & Enrolment
ESSI	Enrolment Systems & Service Innovation
FGPS	Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
FPH	First Peoples' House
GSA	Graduate Students' Association
IST	Information Services and Technology
New SX Survey	Potential new U of A specific student experience survey tool
NSSE	National Survey on Student Engagement
PAIR	Performance Analytics and Institutional Research
PI	Principal Investigators
RO	Registrar's Office
SSC	Student Service Centre
SU	Students' Union
UAI	University of Alberta International
URI	Undergraduate Research Initiative
VPAVPI	Vice Provost & Associate Vice President International
VPCL	Vice Provost and Chief Librarian
VPDOS	Vice Provost and Dean of Students
VPEDI	Vice Provost Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion
VPER	Vice President External Relations
VPF&O	Vice President Facilities and Operations
VPLI	Vice Provost Learning Initiatives
VPRO	Vice Provost and Registrar

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