



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council
Executive Committee
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, February 06, 2012
3-15, UHALL
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Voting Members:

Carl Amrhein	Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair, GFC Executive Committee (Delegate)
Colleen Skidmore	Provost and Vice-President (Academic) (Delegate)
Gerry Kendal	Vice-Provost and University Registrar
Emerson Csorba	Students' Union Vice-President (Academic)
Nima Yousefi Moghaddam	Graduate Student Association Vice-President (Academic)
Ed Blackburn	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Lee Livingstone	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Lise Gotell	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Ingrid Johnston	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Chris de Gara	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Anita Molzahn	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Duncan Saunders	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Jonathan Veinot	Academic Staff, Member of GFC

Presenter(s):

Carl Amrhein	Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair, GFC Executive Committee
Janice Causgrove Dunn	Associate Dean, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
Jayson MacLean	Graduate Ombudsperson, Student OmbudService
Frank Robinson	Vice-Provost and Dean of Students
Natalie Sharpe	Director, Student OmbudService
Fern Snart	Dean, Faculty of Education
Iva Spence	Appeals Coordinator, University Governance
Rory Tighe	President, Students' Union
Mazi Shirvani	Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

Staff:

Garry Bodnar	Coordinator, GFC Executive Committee
Emily Paulsen	Scribe

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Molzahn/Skidmore

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of January 9, 2012

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Blackburn/de Gara

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the Minutes of January 9, 2012.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair

Dr Amrhein noted that Mr Douglas Goss is the new Chair of the Board of Governors.

ACTION ITEMS

4. Faculty of Education Selection/Review Procedures for Department Chairs

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Fern Snart, Dean, Faculty of Education

Purpose of the Proposal: To formalize the Faculty of Education's search procedures and to add the option of a review for Department Chairs.

Discussion:

Dr Snart introduced the item to members noting that it was designed to rectify the previous lack of an internal procedures document for the selection and review of Department Chairs in the Faculty of Education. She noted that, although the document before members was fairly standard in its content, it did set out for the first time a review process for Education Department Chairs. She clarified that the proposed procedures are in complete accordance with existing related UAPPOL policy and procedures.

Motion: Blackburn/Gotell

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, a proposal submitted by the Faculty of Education for Selection/Review Procedures for Department Chairs as set forth in Attachment 1, to take effect upon final approval.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5. Proposed Changes to the GFC Academic Appeals Policy

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Janice Causgrove Dunn, Associate Dean, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation;

Jayson MacLean, Graduate Ombudsperson, Student OmbudService; Natalie Sharpe, Director, Student OmbudService; Iva Spence, Appeals Coordinator, University Governance

Purpose of the Proposal: To bring the GFC Academic Appeals Policy in line with the Code of Student Behaviour and the Practicum Intervention Policy. The (proposed) changes include such matters as: changing the appeal deadline from 21 calendar days to 15 working days; including a timeframe for provision of response and witnesses; changing the language to indicate reasonable notice of hearing and adding a timeframe for completion of hearings. In addition, the information has been reorganized and includes headings to make it easier to locate information.

Discussion:

The presenters asked members to provide any feedback and all suggestions on the proposed changes to the GFC Academic Appeals Policy, which serve to bring this policy/procedural statement in line with the Code of Student Behaviour. Ms Sharpe noted that, for students, the changes would ensure there was a clear expression of due process. Ms Spence enumerated for members the major changes being proposed to the current Policy, which included, amongst others, changing the appeal deadline from 21 calendar days to 15 working days and making the document more logical and better organized. She explained that the proposal will return to the GFC Executive Committee for formal consideration and approval at the Committee's April, 2012 meeting.

Following the presentation, there was a very brief discussion, during which members expressed their general support for the proposal before them on this occasion.

6. Green and Gold Week

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Rory Tighe, President, Students' Union; Frank Robinson, Vice-Provost and Dean of Students

Purpose of the Proposal: To propose the creation of a Green and Gold Week during which academic-, career- and community-based programming takes place. To achieve this week, instructional days will not be scheduled in the week in which Remembrance Day falls. The impact of this proposal will be the removal of two instructional days from the Fall and Winter Terms, beginning the Fall Term one day earlier and the Winter Term two days later and not scheduling instruction during the week in which Remembrance Day occurs in the Fall Term. The Reading Week will be used as an opportunity to offer programs to enhance the student experience.

Discussion:

Mr Tighe explained to members that there had been task force which had looked at the logistics of establishing a Green and Gold Week (ie, a Fall Term Reading Week). He noted that the idea of a Fall Reading Week came from a common belief amongst participants that student success needs to be addressed, especially upon seeing concerning results of the recent National College Health Assessment (NCHA) survey. The data showed that students in every year were affected and that no Faculty was immune. Mr Tighe stated that there would be a variety of supportive programs available to students during the break should they choose to participate. He emphasized that the week would not be a 'fix all' but would be an excellent progressive step towards better student wellness.

Dr Robinson noted that it is necessary to address mental health risks before they become an overwhelming problem. He explained that students have changed over the past several generations—they must now work part-time jobs throughout their time in school; the student population is also made up increasingly of students for whom English is not their first language. Dr Robinson noted that the University of Alberta's retention scores are very low and that the University can do more to promote student success.

The Chair noted that, while the Deans are unanimous in their support to work on student wellness issues, they have provided commentary on this initiative with regard to possible problems with scheduling congestion and accreditation issues.

Members discussed that point that the break might be too late in the semester for students to have a chance to catch up on work and/or better poor academic performance and that, perhaps, the suggested programming should be offered year round. Mr Tighe responded that programming year round would be beneficial in addition to the Fall reading break since the break was not intended as the only solution to such a multi-faceted problem.

A member suggested that students be taught skills to cope with stress rather than receiving additional time off.

After a question from a member regarding the provision of evidence that would support the possible success of the Fall reading week, Mr Tighe explained that there is very little evidence to validate or nullify the potential success of Green and Gold Week—it is for this reason a multifaceted approach to student wellness is so important.

Dr Amrhein explained that the University's Tuesday/Thursday class scheduling cycle has more instructional time than the Monday/Wednesday/Friday cycle so there will not be as much of a loss of instructional minutes as previously thought. He also noted that the University runs many different calendars for Medicine, Law, and other professional programs.

Members then discussed the possibility of bringing this issue back to the GFC Executive Committee in early March for agreement to add this to the agenda for March 19, 2012 meeting of GFC.

ACTION ITEMS

7. Proposed Parchment Wording for the Master of Education (MEd) in Indigenous Peoples' Education

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Mazi Shirvani, Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research; Fern Snart, Dean, Faculty of Education; Gerry Kendal, Vice-Provost and University Registrar

Purpose of the Proposal: To adjust the wording of the program-specific University parchment to reflect the unique partnership the University of Alberta has with Blue Quills First Nations College in the Master of Education (MEd) in Indigenous People's Education; and to ensure this change is reflected on the University's parchment for the first cohort of students receiving the MEd in Indigenous Peoples' Education in partnership with Blue Quills First Nations College.

Discussion:

Dr Snart emphasized the importance of this item for her Faculty and for the University of Alberta—she noted that the partnership between the University and the Blue Quills First Nations College has been ongoing for fifteen years. She explained that Blue Quills was receiving targeted funding to offer this Master's program.

Dr Amrhein clarified that there are three factors which classify a degree as a University of Alberta degree: who gets taught; who does the teaching; and what gets taught. Since these classifications remain under the control of the Dean of the Faculty of Education in this instance, the degree being conferred is one considered strongly supported by a University of Alberta program and, as such, is not considered a shared degree with another independent post-secondary institution. There are University of Alberta professors teaching courses in this program as well as Blue Quills teaching staff who will be considered adjunct professors of the University.

Dr Shirvani further clarified that a distinguishing feature of this partnership is that Blue Quills does not have a graduate program. A member questioned how there could be assurance of the quality of teaching if there is no graduate program at the Blue Quills First Nations College. Dr Snart replied that there are graduate programs at Blue Quills but they are not provincially accredited. She also noted that this MEd program has been designed in very close collaboration between the University and the College.

Several members expressed how positively this partnership would and does affect the University of Alberta.

Motion: Johnston/Molzahn

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from the General Faculties Council, the proposed parchment wording for cohorts of students receiving the Master of Education (MEd) in Indigenous Peoples' Education in partnership with Blue Quills First Nations College, as submitted by the Office of the Registrar and as set forth in Attachment 1, to take effect upon approval.

CARRIED

8. Question Period

Dr Amrhein spent the Question Period discussing Occupy Edmonton's attempts to set up a tent camp and demonstrate on the University's North Campus and the University's coordinated response to this movement. He noted that the University has invited debates on campus in the past but that, since the University has responsibility for such a large number of students, staff, and faculty, it would be irresponsible to allow any form of uncontrolled disruption and unsanctioned occupation of University property. On this latter point, Dr Amrhein added that the University is considered a private entity in the eyes of the law, which raises potential insurance and risk issues with a group such as the Occupy Edmonton movement.

There was a brief discussion following the Chair's comments on the aforementioned issue.

INFORMATION REPORTS

9. Items Approved by the GFC Executive Committee by E-Mail Ballots

There were no items.

10. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

Approved Motions and Final Documents from the GFC Undergraduate Awards and Scholarship Committee (UASC) Meeting of January 17, 2012 (E-Mailed to Members on February 1, 2012)

CLOSING SESSION

11. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:50pm.