



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council
Executive Committee
Approved Open Session Minutes

Wednesday, January 09, 2013
2-31 SAB, South Academic Building
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Voting Members:

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Delegate)	Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair, GFC Executive Committee (delegate)
Colleen Skidmore (Delegate)	Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Academic)
Gerry Kendal	Vice-Provost and University Registrar
Dustin Chelen	Students' Union Vice-President (Academic)
Ashlyn Bernier (Delegate)	Graduate Student Association Vice-President (Academic)
Ed Blackburn	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Lise Gotell	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Norma Nocente	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Wendy Rodgers	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
Kaori Kabata	Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Adam Woods	Undergraduate Student, Member of GFC

Presenter:

Martin Ferguson-Pell	Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Acting Chair, GFC Executive Committee
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Staff:

Garry Bodnar	Director, General Faculties Council (GFC) Services and Secretary to GFC
Marion Haggarty-France	University Secretary
Andrea Patrick	Scribe

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Saunders/Molzahn

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of December 3, 2012

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Blackburn/Nocente

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the Minutes of December 3, 2012.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair

Dr Ferguson-Pell commented on a number of issues of interest to members.

ACTION ITEMS

4. Draft Agenda for the January 21, 2013 Meeting of General Faculties Council (GFC)

4.1 Graduate Studies at the University of Alberta (Discussion Only)

4.2 Visioning Committee Report (Discussion Only) (to be distributed)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Martin Ferguson-Pell, Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Purpose of the Proposal: To approve the Agenda for the January 21, 2013 meeting of GFC.

Discussion:

4.1 Graduate Studies at the University of Alberta

Dr Ferguson-Pell reported that Dr Catherine Swindlehurst's report on graduate studies administration and related issues, based on her extensive consultation across the institution, was submitted in rough draft on December 24, 2012 to the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic). While it contains substantive information, it will require some revision before the document can be released publicly. In an effort to maintain the integrity of the objectives of the project, Dr Ferguson-Pell added that the Administration is reluctant to release the report prematurely. He stated that the final report will be a combination of the findings within the previous review of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research conducted approximately two-and-a-half years ago, Dr Swindlehurst's report, and a set of recommendations. He noted the report will be discussed at the March 18, 2013 meeting of General Faculties Council (GFC).

Members expressed several comments and questions regarding this issue, including, but not limited to: the timeline of action for recommendations contained within the report; who the target audience of Dr Swindlehurst's report is; if a draft summary of the report could be released ahead of the March 18, 2013 GFC meeting for certain audiences (eg, the Graduate Students' Association (GSA)) to review; and that Faculty representation on whatever groups are convened to review and enact the report's

recommendations might be of considerable benefit, particularly as 'action' items are identified and narrowed down.

Although he noted that many of the findings within Dr Swindlehurst's report were not surprising, Dr Ferguson-Pell stated that the recommendations within the report will be considered fluid in nature, and he expects that consultation on the recommendations and ways to move forward will be a continuous process.

4.2 Visioning Committee Report

Dr Ferguson-Pell explained that the Visioning Committee Report has not been released widely because it is still in the process of being finalized. He added that this report was generated at the request of the President to provide information about the use of digital learning initiatives at the University of Alberta and that the report is not necessarily the view of Administration—rather, they are the findings of the Visioning Committee.

Members expressed several comments and questions relating to this issue, including, but not limited to: how this report relates to Athabasca University and the online methods by which it offers its academic programming; whether or not duplication of programs and courses has been addressed across Campus Alberta; whether or not digitizing learning strategies is an inevitability for the University of Alberta; that even though an on-campus experience is crucial for students, new technology offers a wide variety of learning options, particularly for students in remote communities; that students do expect the use of technology within the classroom, especially in larger classes; that teaching and learning in relation to technology needs to be continually reviewed; that the academy needs to be engaged in identifying the early steps in fulfilling some of the recommendations within the report; that it is crucial to identify how much financial support and supporting infrastructure might be necessary to support online/digital learning initiatives before planning can begin; and who should be present at the GFC meeting where the report comes up for discussion to take possible questions from members in relation to this matter.

Dr Ferguson-Pell added that there is a lot of focus within the report on technology and that this focus might be too narrow. He would like to see the University approach the issue with a specific focus on blending traditional teaching methods with technology to offer transformative experiences to students and to create contributive citizens, successful professionals, and happy members of society. He stated that the technology alone is not enough. He reported that another committee has been created by his Office to consider this issue more specifically, a group called "Collegium Vocale," which has already met several times. This group will create a "straw man" document for distribution by the end of March, 2013, highlighting ways the University of Alberta's efforts to digitize the learning experience will be linked to precepts within *Dare to Discover*.

Draft Agenda for the January 21, 2013 Meeting of General Faculties Council (GFC)

Mr Bodnar explained that a proposal entitled, "Proposal for Non-Departmentalized Status for the University of Alberta's School of Public Health," submitted by Dr Lory Laing, Interim Dean, School of Public Health, has been forwarded to the GFC APC Academic Planning Committee (APC) for review at its meeting on January 16, 2013, with recommendation to GFC for consideration at Council's meeting on January 21, 2013. He added that in the event that GFC APC does not recommend the item, it would be withdrawn from that GFC meeting agenda. He noted that if the proposal is not considered at the January 21 GFC meeting, it will not be routed to the Board of Governors for final approval until May, 2013; alternately, if it were considered (and recommended forward) by GFC on January 21, it would then go to the Board for review at its February 8 meeting. Dr Ferguson-Pell added that it would also be beneficial to the current hiring process of a new Dean of the School of Public Health if the proposal could be finalized sooner. Members

agreed to the addition of this item to the agenda for the upcoming GFC meeting.

Mr Bodnar then asked members to review the reports under Item 13 on the draft GFC agenda, adding that they have the authority to identify reports that, in their opinion, should be specifically and individually highlighted at the GFC meeting. Members agreed that the 'Helping Individuals at Risk and Safe Disclosure and Human Rights Activity Report 2011-2012' should be added as a discrete discussion item to the January 21 GFC agenda.

Motion: Kendal/Skidmore

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the Agenda, as amended, for the January 21, 2013 meeting of General Faculties Council (GFC).

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5. Question Period

There were no questions.

INFORMATION REPORTS

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

There were no items.

7. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

Membership Consideration, Teaching & Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF) Adjudication [Committee] [E-Mailed to Members on December 7, 2012]

CLOSING SESSION

8. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:35 pm.