



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council
Executive Committee
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, April 11, 2016
2-31 South Academic Building (SAB)
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Voting Members:

David Turpin	Chair, President
Lisa Collins	Member, Vice-Provost and University Registrar
Steven Dew	Member, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Duncan Elliott	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Paul Jurasz	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Anita Molzahn	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Steve Patten	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Fahim Rahman	Member, Vice-President (Academic), Students' Union
Sean Robertson	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Firouz Khodayari (Delegate)	Member, Vice-President (Academic), Graduate Students' Association
Mirko van der Baan	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Jonathan White	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Sheena Wilson	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC

Presenter(s):

David Turpin	President and Chair, GFC Executive Committee
Steven Dew	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Duncan Elliott	Co-Chair, Academic Governance Working Group and member, GFC Executive Committee
Mirko van der Baan	Co-Chair, Academic Governance Working Group and member, GFC Executive Committee
Yvette d'Entremont	Associate Dean (Academic), Faculté Saint-Jean
Karsten Mundel	Associate Dean (Academic), Augustana Faculty
Heather Zwicker	Interim Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

Staff:

Meg Brolley, General Faculties Council (GFC) Secretary and Manager of GFC Services
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: Collins/Molzahn

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of March 7, 2016

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Wilson/Patten

THAT the GFC Executive approve the Minutes of March 7, 2016.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair

The Chair reported on his recent visit to Europe, where he attended the annual general meeting of the World University Network (WUN) and met with key research partners, alumni and donors.

He further reported that the federal government recently launched the application process for \$2 billion in funding for post-secondary research and innovation infrastructure.

The Chair noted that searches are currently underway for the Vice-President (Finance and Administration) and the Vice-President (Facilities and Operations).

ACTION ITEMS

4. Proposal from the Faculté Saint-Jean to add FRANC 116, 117, 216, 226 to the List of Courses with Consolidated Examinations

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Yvette d'Entremont, Associate Dean (Academic), Faculté Saint-Jean

Purpose of the Proposal: To add FRANC 116, 117, 216, 226 to the list of courses for which consolidated final exams are scheduled.

Discussion:

Dr d'Entremont indicated that consolidated exams in the specified courses within the proposal would increase consistency in content as well as examination procedures.

Members provided several comments surrounding this proposal, including support for the proposal and caution in relation to time conflicts for students taking multiple consolidated examinations. A member, in addition, questioned the need for the GFC Executive Committee to retain oversight over the process.

Vice-Provost and University Registrar Lisa Collins replied that her team has reviewed this proposal, and that the current formal processes in place to catalogue consolidated examination information across the academy is vitally important.

Motion: Wilson/Elliott

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the addition of FRANC 116, 117, 216, 226 to the list of courses with Consolidated Final Examinations, as submitted

by the Faculté Saint-Jean, to take effect 2016/2017.

CARRIED

5. Proposed New Course Designation of AUIND (Augustana - Indigenous Studies), Augustana Faculty

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Karsten Mundel, Associate Dean (Academic), Augustana Faculty

Purpose of the Proposal: To approve a new course designator, AUIND, as an identifier of courses for the Social Sciences Department in Augustana Faculty.

Discussion:

Dr Mundel reported that this proposal is part of an ongoing effort at Augustana Faculty to develop ways in which to increase and improve Aboriginal student enrollment and student services, and that the creation of an AUIND designation for courses offered through Augustana Faculty will be a crucial component of this endeavor.

Members, during the discussion surrounding this proposal, offered various comments and questions in relation to this new course designator and whether it should be applied across the entire academy. Members also enquired about consultation with the Faculty of Native Studies in regards to the development of this proposal.

A member pointed out that this could cause confusion with students, and also could cause duplication. He suggested further that the Faculty of Native Studies would have appreciated more discussion and consultation.

In response, Dr Mundel reported that he had discussed this proposal with Dr Frank Tough as it was being developed. In addition, he noted that most of the concerns expressed relate to all initiatives offered at Augustana Faculty, since a lot of courses and programming at Augustana Faculty are similar to ones offered at North Campus. He added this is an ongoing discussion and concern, and suggested that a larger conversation occur about the role of Augustana Faculty within the academy. He also suggested that, for future endeavors, these types of proposals could be vetted through Faculty Council.

In regards to courses, Ms Brolley confirmed that these have been circulated as per Section 37 of the GFC Policy Manual. She clarified that this specific proposal relates only to the approval of the course designator.

Motion: Collins/White

THAT GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the new course designator of AUIND (Augustana – Indigenous Studies), Department of Social Sciences, as submitted by Augustana Faculty, to take effect for Fall Term 2016.

CARRIED

The discussion continued following the vote.

A member expressed concern that there is a lack of institutional policy surrounding specific content normally covered by one Faculty.

Provost and Vice-President Dr Steven Dew responded that this issue is complicated in that many Faculties offer courses specific to indigenous studies, but at the same time, the Faculty of Native Studies must not be undermined.

The Chair agreed that the issue would require further discussion, and requested that Dr Dew include Deputy Provost Dr Wendy Rodgers in the discussion.

6. Proposed Changes to the UAPPOL Faculty Deans Selection Procedure and Review Procedure

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Purpose of the Proposal: To remove the criteria which exclude direct reports from being eligible to serve on Dean Selection Committees and Dean Review Committees as indicated in the UAPPOL Faculty Deans Selection Procedure and the Faculty Deans Review Procedure.

Discussion:

The Chair reported that the proposed changes to the UAPPOL Faculty Deans Selection Procedure and the Faculty Deans Review Procedure will allow direct reports to fill certain eligible seats on the Deans selection/review committees. In addition, he pointed out editorial amendments to the "Scope" section of the related procedures within UAPPOL.

During the discussion, in addition to clarifying the definition of "visitors to campus", the Chair explained that this issue has been problematic in smaller Faculties and that there is great value in including an assistant or associate dean on the committee.

In regards to conflict of interest, the Chair noted that he is working on an updated statement, and that this would be managed by the Chair of the committee.

A member made note of her support for these revisions.

Motion: Patten/Molzahn

THAT the GFC Executive Committee recommend to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC), with delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the proposed changes to the UAPPOL Faculty Deans Selection Procedure and the UAPPOL Faculty Deans Review Procedure, as set forth in Attachment 1 and Attachment 2, to take effect immediately.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

7. Proposal for a new Scheduling Initiative for Augustana Faculty

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting files.

Presenter: Karsten Mundel, Associate Dean (Academic), Augustana Faculty

Purpose of the Proposal: To discuss a new scheduling initiative at Augustana Faculty.

Discussion:

Dr Mundel explained to members that this initiative has been in the development phase for a number of years, and is intended to emphasize that Augustana Faculty places value on community-based education, international and outdoor educational experiences, undergraduate research and connections to rural and Aboriginal communities. He added that this endeavor aims to provide more experiential learning opportunities for students, as well as to formalize Augustana's unique undergraduate student experience within Campus Alberta.

In addition to addressing issues surrounding the formal approval of this proposal, Dr Mundel clarified that the first year experience would be capped at 25 students, to foster a sense of community among cohort members and to improve collaboration between students and faculty members. He provided additional clarification surrounding teaching hours.

He acknowledged that this endeavor will require strategic collaboration among departments at Augustana Faculty, adding that there has been special consideration around this element of the proposal and that the Faculty is small enough to achieve this outcome.

The Chair thanked Dr Mundel for his presentation.

8. Annual Report on Graduate Enrolment 2015/16

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting files.

Presenter: Heather Zwicker, Interim Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

Purpose of the Proposal: To discuss the 2015/16 report on graduate enrolment.

Discussion:

The Chair acknowledged the assistance of the Vice-Provost and University Registrar, Ms Lisa Collins, in creating the template used in this Report.

Dr Zwicker provided members with key findings of the Report, noting that out of the 7500 graduate students, a third are doctoral students, and the rest Masters students. She pointed out a softening in doctoral enrolment, perhaps due to a decline in the professoriate, which was caused by budget cuts. She explained that the graduate student body is comprised of a high percentage of international students, and that this group of students are unevenly distributed across Faculties. She stated that as such, each Faculty has their own vulnerabilities in regards to international students, and that this can even be impacted by changes in the relations between countries. She explained that more could be done to attract and retain Indigenous and Metis students.

She reported that the admission GPA has remained high, and that time to completion is steady or declining. She explained that attrition rates are difficult to calculate because there are a variety of situations and life events which can factor in. She noted, however, that international students tend to complete their programs faster.

In addition to commendation on the Report, members discussed the contents of the Report in relation to the University of Alberta's rankings. The Chair acknowledged that this could be attributed to the declining professoriate, as well as a drop in funding.

Dr Zwicker noted that she continues to work with Strategic Analysis on identifying any other relevant data for this annual Report.

The Chair thanked Dr Zwicker for her Report.

9. Draft Institutional Strategic Plan

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: David Turpin, President and Chair, GFC Executive Committee

Purpose of the Proposal: To discuss the draft Institutional Strategic Plan.

Discussion:

The Chair reported that the draft institutional strategic plan has been presented another 27 times across campuses since the March meeting, and that General Faculties Council received it positively. He stated that members of the community have provided excellent commentary surrounding language, areas of focus, and have expressed several important questions regarding implementation.

In response to a question regarding post-approval activities, the Chair reported that the Provost has been working with the Vice-Presidents on the objectives and strategies within the document and that a retreat in June will begin to animate the implementation plan. The Chair noted that these details will be provided in the fall.

10. Academic Governance Working Group - Update

There were no documents.

Presenter(s): Duncan Elliott, Co-Chair, Academic Governance Working Group and member, GFC Executive Committee; Mirko van der Baan, Co-Chair, Academic Governance Working Group and member, GFC Executive Committee

Purpose of the Proposal: For information/discussion.

Discussion:

Dr Elliott and Dr van der Baan provided members with an update in regards to the recent activities of the Academic Governance Working Group, which has been tasked with reviewing GFC's delegated authorities to its Standing Committees. Specifically, Dr van der Baan reported that members had been asked to review the Terms of Reference for each Standing Committee with a focus on ensuring that current practices reflect the Terms of Reference and the identification of any governance issues.

The Committee engaged in a lengthy discussion surrounding the June 30, 2016 deadline for GFC to vote on the delegations of authority, with several members expressing concern that a fulsome review would require an extension.

In relation to the May 2, 2016 meeting of GFC, Dr van der Baan suggested that Council take the time to review its own Terms of Reference in detail. In response, members expressed support for this, adding that the discussion at GFC could include governance principles and an in-depth review of GFC's own mandate.

The Chair then invited members to discuss the GFC Executive Committee's Terms of Reference.

University Secretary Marion Haggarty-France provided clarification that the "urgent item" clause within the Terms of Reference is rarely used. Members discussed suggestions to modify this to include "in exceptional cases" or "such matters will be reported to GFC at the next meeting". Ms Haggarty-France reminded members that all of GFC's Standing Committees regularly report to GFC on actions taken under delegated authority.

Other identified issues included the Committee's delegated authority to consider policy issues in relation to academic awards; that the digital age makes the term "urgent" less meaningful; the authority over the academic schedule and how this impacted the formal approval process of the Fall Term Reading Week proposal; that there is a perception by some GFC members that the GFC Executive Committee is doing GFC's work; that the authority over examination rooms seems overreaching; whether student residences provide GFC with an annual report; that the authority over marking and grading seems to fall in line with the mandate of the GFC Academic Planning Committee; clarification about membership of the Academic Governance Working Group; suggestions to standardize regular review of Terms of Reference and mandate.

Members discussed the procedures for adding an item to the GFC Agenda, and a member pointed out that it is not advisable to surprise GFC members with extra items at every meeting. A member suggested that the Chair could provide a statement on how to add an item to the GFC Agenda at the beginning of each meeting. On this point, several members noted that this reminder would be best delivered by the Chair of GFC.

The Chair stated that renewing delegations would be the easiest part of compliance with the June 30, 2016 deadline, but that revisions would require additional time and consideration to allow for the type of detailed, sequential work required in such a process. He emphasized this process cannot be rushed.

Members engaged in a discussion surrounding how the June 30, 2016 deadline could be respected while at the same time reinforcing the complexity of this review. Dr Elliott stated that the Academic Governance Working Group had been unable to identify any specific changes to existing delegated authorities.

Members discussed the importance of involving the members and Chair of all GFC's Standing Committees in the process of this review, and Dr van der Baan suggested that designing a uniform template for each Standing Committee to complete would be beneficial for this process. He noted that the template could include a section for the purpose of identifying issues of concern.

Ms Brolley cautioned that tinkering with the Terms of Reference may not be strategic or useful, and the Chair added that reviewing and approving changes to Standing Committee Terms of Reference could not be done piecemeal, as they are all interconnected.

Ms Haggarty-France stated that regular and routine review of Terms of Reference is part of good governance, and could be built within each Committee work plan.

The Chair noted that the May 2 and May 30 meetings of GFC might have lower student attendance due to the summer break, but added that this process has been advantageous to members of the community at this time. He thanked members of the Academic Governance Working Group and the GFC Executive Committee for their efforts in this regard.

ACTION ITEMS

11. Draft Agenda for the May 2, 2016 Meeting of General Faculties Council (GFC)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: David Turpin, President and Chair, GFC Executive Committee

Purpose of the Proposal: To approve the agenda for the General Faculties Council meeting of May 2, 2016.

Discussion:

The Chair invited members to review the proposed agenda for the GFC meeting of May 2, 2016.

During the discussion in relation to this item, members provided commentary surrounding the GFC Nominating Committee mandate and processes, as well as where the item should be placed on the agenda. Members suggested placing the item at the top of the agenda to allow the Chair of the GFC Nominating Committee to address Council.

Motion: Rahman/Wilson

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the agenda for the General Faculties Council meeting of May 2, 2016.

CARRIED

INFORMATION REPORTS

12. Items Approved by the GFC Executive Committee by e-mail Ballots

There were no items.

13. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

14. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.