



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council
Executive Committee
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, January 11, 2021
Zoom Virtual Meeting
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Bill Flanagan
Steven Dew
David Draper
Anastasia Elias
Mary Forhan
Nat Kav

Christopher Lupke
Sean McMurtry
Pierre-Yves Mocquais
Roger Moore
Melissa Padfield
Sachiketha Reddy
Eleni Stroulia

non-voting:

Brad Hamdon
Kate Peters

REGRETS:

Adarsh Badesha

Staff:

Heather Richholt, Scribe

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Bill Flanagan, President and Vice-Chancellor, and Chair of GFC Executive Committee (EXEC)

Discussion:

Provost and Vice-President (Academic) Dew noted that he would like to add a discussion item, Remote Delivery and Assessment. The Chair suggested that item be the new item 6 and that the remaining items be renumbered accordingly.

Motion: Mocquais/Moore

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the agenda as amended.

CARRIED

2. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

Presenter(s): Bill Flanagan, President and Vice-Chancellor, and Chair of EXEC

Discussion:

The Chair asked Andrew Sharman, Vice-President (Facilities and Operations) and executive lead of the university's COVID-19 response to provide an update. Mr Sharman spoke about the current public health measures, COVID-19 vaccine availability, the AHS alternate care centre in the Butterdome, international travel restrictions, and restrictions on university properties.

Members discussed the current restrictions and their impacts on research, funding obligations, experiential learning, accreditation requirements, access to labs and libraries, and student progression in their programs.

The Chair noted the Board of Governors had approved Vice-President (Facilities & Operations) Andrew Sharman's second five-year term, effective July 1, 2021 and appointed Elan MacDonald as the University of

Alberta's new Vice-President (External Relations), effective January 1, 2021. He also noted that the search for the new Vice-President (Research and Innovation) would be launched soon.

The Chair announced that the GFC, Board of Governors, and Senate summit had been scheduled for March 26 from 12:00 to 5:00 p.m. and that more details would be forthcoming.

The Chair then spoke about the Board of Governors' decisions on Academic Restructuring at their meeting of December 11, 2020 and his fiduciary duties and responsibilities related to his three roles as Chair of GFC, President of the University, and member of the Board of Governors. He expressed his commitment to collegial governance and fostering good relations between the Board and GFC.

Members discussed the disappointment and cynicism of faculty, staff, and students related to the consultation on Academic Restructuring and the decision of the Board, which did not align with the recommendations of GFC.

CONSENT AGENDA

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Consent Agenda Mover and Seconder: Moore/Padfield

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of November 30, 2020

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve the open session minutes of November 30, 2020.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. Update on the Work of the New GFC Programs Committee

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Tammy Hopper, Vice-Provost (Programs), and Chair of GFC Programs Committee; Victoria Ruetalo, Associate Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies & Research, and Vice-Chair of GFC Programs Committee

Discussion:

Dr Hopper provided some background on the consultation and development of the GFC Programs Committee (PC) and an update of the committee's work to date. She noted that the goal to increase clarity and transparency of program approval processes had been accomplished through the establishment of PC by having most items coming to a single governance committee for approval with delegated authority. Dr Hopper further explained that the support of the Undergraduate and Graduate Program Support Teams provided administrative support and feedback, for program approvals in the new structure before they enter the governance stream and that this helped to provide clarity on the roles of administration and governance. She also spoke about the committee membership and their important and complex conversations on issues where academic and institutional issues intersect.

Dr Hopper noted that there was an ongoing issue with course and minor program changes and the conflict between PC's terms of reference and the outdated GFC Policy 37 but that the conflict was being addressed by continuing to post materials on the governance website for the community to review as well as approval at PC.

GFC Secretary Kate Peters addressed the motion that came out of the GFC meeting of October 19, 2020 when the GFC Policy 37 was on the consent agenda for rescission:

THAT the General Faculties Council pull the “Proposed Rescission of GFC Policy 37” from the “Consent Agenda” and table it for consideration at a later meeting at which we also first have the opportunity to consider whether GFC wishes to revise the Programs Committee Terms of Reference.

She noted that this discussion and rescission of Policy 37 were slated to come forward in February and that the Programs Committee had discussed the concerns at their meeting in November.

Dr Hopper gave some highlights from the discussion at PC on their Terms of Reference including:

- the impact of academic restructuring and the uncertainty that these changes were causing;
- the possibility that there were fears in the community that GFC authority might be wielded to make program changes without due process being followed;
- the steps that Faculties took when they made program changes;
- clarification that without Faculties taking the lead, suspensions and terminations could not come forward to GFC for approval;
- limits of authority and the ability of PC to defer to the Academic Planning Committee or full GFC if there were concerns about a proposal; and
- that the committee felt quite strongly that it was important to give the Programs Committee time with these terms of reference, and committed to reviewing them on the standard three year timeline.

There were no questions.

5. Clean Air Strategy

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Kevin Friese, Assistant Dean, Health and Wellness, Office of the Dean of Students; Andrew Leitch, Director, ERM Programs, Risk Management Services

Discussion:

Mr Friese and Mr Leitch gave a presentation on the university's Clean Air Strategy including:

- the GFC motion of March 2018 asking administration to develop a clean air strategy;
- the representative working group principles and activities;
- the results of an evaluation of the policies of peer institutions;
- the results of the survey of the university community; and
- some considerations related to the options for a total ban or a continuation of a partial ban.

Members discussed the effects of a total ban on those who live in residence or have mobility issues and concerns that a total ban would be difficult to enforce and result in more rule breaking.

6 Remote Delivery and Assessment (no documents)

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic); John Nychka, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives)

Discussion:

Dr Dew noted that the challenge in addressing concerns related to remote delivery was effectively balancing the needs of students and the needs of instructors.

Dr Nychka remarked that there was a need to address all of the aspects of how students and instructors could get help right now as well as how to design courses to avoid these issues for the future.

Members discussed the challenges related to synchronous delivery of lectures and exams for students who parent, have connectivity issues, or live in other time zones. Members asked for the specific details of the challenges as well as potential solutions.

7. Question Period

There were no questions.

ACTION ITEMS

8. Draft Agenda for the Next Meeting of General Faculties Council

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Bill Flanagan, President and Vice-Chancellor, and Chair of EXEC

Discussion:

The Chair noted that the GFC agenda would be amended to include the discussion item on Remote Delivery and Assessment.

Motion: Moore/Padfield

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the Agenda for the January 25, 2021 meeting of General Faculties Council, as set forth in Attachment 1, as amended.

CARRIED

INFORMATION REPORTS

9. Information Items Forwarded to GFC Executive Committee between Meetings

There were no items.

10. Items Approved by the GFC Executive Committee by email ballots

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

11. Adjournment

- Next Meeting of Exec: February 8, 2021
- Next Meeting of GFC: January 25, 2021

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:50 p.m.