
General Faculties Council
University Teaching Awards Committee
Approved Minutes

Friday, October 07, 2011
3-15, UHALL
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

ATTENDEES:

Brenda Cameron – Chair, Melissa Hartley, Uwe Hacke, Michael Marchen, Minhao Zeng, Eren Cervantes-Altamirano, Janis Sasaki, Garry Bodnar (Coordinator and Scribe)

PRESENTERS AND GUESTS:

Garry Bodnar, Coordinator, GFC University Teaching Awards Committee
Kathleen Brough, Portfolio Initiatives Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Brenda Cameron, Chair, GFC University Teaching Awards Committee
Elisabeth Le, Recent Past Chair, GFC University Teaching Awards Committee

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Sasaki/Hacke

THAT the GFC University Teaching Awards Committee approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of June 17, 2011

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Zeng/Marchen

THAT the GFC University Teaching Awards Committee approve the Open Session Minutes of June 17, 2011.
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CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair

There were no comments from the Chair.

4. Orientation and Kick-off (no documents)

Presenter: Garry Bodnar, Coordinator, GFC University Teaching Awards Committee

Purpose of the Proposal: To provide new and continuing members of the GFC University Teaching

Awards Committee (UTAC) with an (annual) orientation to the legislative and administrative frameworks in which this standing committee of General Faculties Council (GFC) will operate during the Academic Year 2011-2012.

Discussion:

Mr Bodnar welcomed members to the new academic year and described a general overview of the orientation process undertaken by University Governance. He then continued by providing members with a formal orientation, aided by a web-based presentation, highlighting the following: the *Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA)*; various GFC and GFC Standing Committee Terms of Reference; samples of GFC UTAC Agendas, Minutes, and Outlines of Issue; and other relevant resource documentation upon which members can draw as they perform their duties on GFC UTAC.

ACTION ITEMS

5. Proposed Revisions to the Awards for Teaching Excellence Procedures

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Brenda Cameron Chair, GFC University Teaching Awards Committee, Garry Bodnar, Coordinator, GFC University Teaching Awards Committee, Elisabeth Le, Recent Past Chair, GFC University Teaching Awards Committee

Purpose of the Proposal: To address concerns and issues raised with the administration of the Procedures for the Awards for Teaching Excellence, based on feedback provided by representatives of the Academic Awards and Ceremonies Office (AACO), Office of the Registrar, who are responsible for vetting all nomination packages for the awards adjudicated by GFC UTAC, and from those members who served on GFC UTAC in the Academic Year 2010-2011, based on their adjudication of these awards in the Spring of 2011.

Discussion:

The Chair and the Committee Coordinator went through the proposed changes to existing procedures (in UAPPOL) for the University of Alberta's awards for teaching excellence, as set out in the material before members. Professor Le, as recent Past Chair of GFC UTAC, provided additional commentary on the procedural amendments, many of which had been recommended by those who had served on the Committee in the Academic Year 2010-2011 and had been involved in the Spring, 2011 adjudication of the teaching awards for which this body has GFC-delegated responsibility.

During the ensuing discussion, the presenters addressed questions and comments from members including, but not limited, to the following: whether or not Deans should be asked to provide, for each nominee, a letter of transmittal rather than a detailed letter of support for the candidate; whether or not nominees should be active participants in constructing their own award nominations; clarification of the differences between coordinated and non-coordinated (now proposed as 'team teaching') courses and the underlying rationale for seeking nominations for one type of course over the other from one year to the next; and clarification on what is meant by the criterion, "Presents the subject matter at an appropriate level of rigour[.]," for the Rutherford Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching.

Members suggested and the presenters agreed to a number of minor editorial amendments, all viewed as 'friendly' in nature, to the proposal before the Committee.

Motion: Marchen/Zeng

THAT the GFC University Teaching Awards Committee (UTAC) recommend to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) proposed changes, (submitted by the Committee) to the Rutherford Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (Procedure) (set forth in Attachment 1, including the checklist); the William Hardy Alexander Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (Procedure) (set forth in Attachment 2, including the checklist); the Provost's Awards for Early Achievement (Procedure) (set forth in Attachment 3, including the checklist); and the Teaching Unit Award (Procedure) (set forth in Attachment 4, including the checklist), all for implementation upon the Provost's final approval.

CARRIED

6. Proposed Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching Procedure (UAPPOL)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Kathleen Brough, Portfolio Initiatives Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Purpose of the Proposal: To propose a new procedure under the Awards for Teaching Excellence Policy to recognize those individuals who have demonstrated excellence in teaching at the graduate level.

Discussion:

Ms Brough presented the rationale underlying and impetus for creating the new (proposed) Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching. She noted that this award was intended for faculty who engage in graduate-level teaching and was not intended to celebrate graduate students who taught well—the Graduate Student Teaching Award (GSTA) was the award made available annually to these students.

Ms Brough commented that the criteria for this proposed award did not include reference to Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI), as these were not viewed as particularly useful in graduate teaching.

During the ensuing discussion, the presenter addressed questions and comments from members including, but not limited, to the following: whether or not instructors who taught courses offered simultaneously to both graduate students and senior-level undergraduate students would qualify for this award.

Members suggested the 'friendly' amendments agreed upon for the previous agenda item (and the affected teaching award procedures) be employed for the procedure associated with this newly-proposed teaching award. Ms Brough agreed to incorporate the same revisions into the item before members if they formally recommended this award on to the GFC Executive Committee.

Motion: Cervantes-Altamirano/Hartley

THAT the GFC University Teaching Awards Committee recommend to the GFC Executive Committee the new (proposed) Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching Procedure, as set forth in Attachment 1, to be effective upon final approval.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

7. Question Period

There were no questions.

INFORMATION ITEMS

8. Items Approved by the Committee by E-Mail Ballots

There were no items.

9. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items

CLOSING SESSION

10. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 2:35 pm.