

General Faculties Council
University Teaching Awards Committee (UTAC)
Approved Open Session Minutes

Thursday, March 09, 2023
South Academic Building (SAB) 3-07
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Tracy Raivio, Chair
Trish Manns, Vice-Chair
Benjamin Cheung
Brooklyn Mackown

Victoria Ruetalo
Janet Wesselius
Minn N Yoon
non-voting:
Kate Peters

REGRETS:

Ali Assi
Brad Hamdon
Sabrina Jannat Shanta
Nakita Valerio

Staff:

Heather Richholt, Coordinator

OPENING SESSION

Before calling the meeting to order the Chair acknowledged the territory and observed that this committee's work to respond to the Report of the Equity, Diversity, & Inclusivity Review of Teaching Award Working Group would bring the university's commitments to Braiding Past, Present and Future: University of Alberta Indigenous Strategic Plan, and the Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity together in practice.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Tracy Raivio, Professor and Chair of UTAC

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC University Teaching Awards Committee approve the agenda.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2. Teaching Centres, Teaching Awards, and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (no documents)

Presenter(s): Tommy Mayberry, Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

Discussion:

T Mayberry spoke about some of the recent changes in CTL in response to budget cuts and the Service Excellence Transformation (SET). They noted how teaching centres across post-secondary institutions are connected to pedagogical innovations and the work that is happening to break down structural and colonial barriers in the industry. They shared some strategies that could be used to change the awards process including multimodal applications and one common application for all awards. They expressed that this was an opportunity for the UofA to be a leader in what it can look like to reward and retain talented instructors.

Members discussed:

- the need to connect this work with the university's teaching and education culture;
- how the proposed changes to the application process would reduce barriers;
- that the adjudication process should be coupled with the criteria;
- ways beyond awards to raise the profile of the university's best teachers including open access materials, and remote speaker series;
- the benefits of a common application so that administrators can match people up with awards and opportunities that suit their talents; and
- the potential to make use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools at certain places in the application process.

Members thanked T Mayberry for their contributions and the Chair invited them to stay and participate in the remainder of the meeting.

3. Working Session - Proposed Revisions to the Awards for Teaching Excellence Policy Suite

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Karsten Mündel, Acting Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives)

Discussion:

K Mündel provided an overview of the draft documents and noted the proposal to move to one policy and one procedure with administrative details and adjudication guidelines available on the website. He emphasized the commitment to transparency in the administrative and adjudication pieces. He thanked the members who had met and participated in the preparation of the draft documents.

Members workshopped the documents and made suggestions and comments including but not limited to:

- whether the current suite of awards would be changing or stay the same;
- the history of the award names;
- that the criteria should be broader to allow the adjudication committee to do its work;
- how the application process could be made less onerous;
- concerns with barriers inherent in the nomination process and the move to an application instead;
- how to celebrate and recognize those who do not receive awards;
- that the Centre for Teaching and Learning could be a powerful partner in changing the culture around recognition of teaching;
- that principles in the policy suite should be applicable beyond awards for teaching excellence; and
- changes to language to respond to principles of Indigenous Initiatives, and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

4. Reimagining GFC UTAC's Composition (no documents)

Presenter(s): Kate Peters, GFC Secretary and Manager, GFC Services

Discussion:

K Peters asked members to consider the recommendations in the report and the university's commitments to Indigenous Initiatives, and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. She noted that current composition shouldn't be considered, rather, that the committee was asked to imagine what UTAC's membership should be.

The committee's discussion included the following considerations and suggestions:

- UTAC's composition should not be expected to align with the Principles for GFC Standing Committee Composition because of their unique mandate and because equity denied groups may not be represented on GFC
- That the committee should have members with knowledge on Indigenous Initiatives, and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and that this must be reflected in the adjudication composition
- Faculty/Discipline diversity should not be a criteria for composition as we have over-focused on this in the past, instead, pedagogical diversity would be a better criteria
- Composition should include:
 - Students from specific demographic groups
 - A more balanced complement of academic staff members
 - More at-large and Academic Teaching Staff members
 - Chairs Council representative
 - Alumni/Public/Community members
 - The ability for the committee to add members to fill gaps
- Resource/Appointed members should include:
 - Vice-Provost (Indigenous Programming and Research)
 - Vice-Provost (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion)
 - Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives)
 - Director of Centre for Teaching and Learning

K Peters thanked members for their input and noted that UTAC's terms of reference would be considered at the next meeting of GFC Executive's Subcommittee on Governance and Procedural Oversight.

INFORMATION REPORTS

5. Communications Sent Between Meetings
 - Presentation Slides - March 9th Special Meeting - Working Group

CLOSING SESSION

6. Adjournment
 - Next meeting of UTAC: March 30, 2023
 - Next meeting of GFC: March 20, 2023