



General Faculties Council
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, February 22, 2021
Zoom Virtual Meeting
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Statutory Members:

Ex-Officio:

Bill Flanagan, Chair
Chris Andersen
Dale Askey
Barbara Billingsley
Stanford Blade
Greta Cummings
Neal Davies
Steven Dew
Walter Dixon
Joseph Doucet
Fraser Forbes
Todd Gilchrist
Robert Haennel
Brenda Hemmelgarn
Shanthi Johnson
Matina Kalcounis-Rueppell
Elan MacDonald
Maria Mayan
Brooke Milne
Pierre-Yves Mocuquais
Kerry Mummary
Melissa Padfield
Steve Patten
Andrew Sharman
Demetres Tryphonopoulos
Jennifer Tupper

Elected Faculty:

Jason Acker
W. Ted Allison
J Nelson Amaral
Nicholas Beier
Pamela Brett-MacLean
Robert Burrell
Heather Coleman
Piet Defraeye
Gary Eitzen
Anastasia Elias
Mary Forhan
Michael Frishkopf
Basil Hubbard
Christine Hughes

Peter Hurd
Marianne Jacquet
Nat Kav
Jessica Kolopenuk
Hollis Lai
Pierre Lemelin
Kathleen Lowrey
Susanne Luhmann
Christopher Lupke
Derek MacKenzie
Pirkko Markula
Sean McMurtry
Al Meldrum
Sue-Ann Mok
Roger Moore
Sarah Moore
Sujata Persad
Frances Plane
Elena Posse de Chaves
Cheryl Poth
Christina Rinaldi
Dan Romanyk
Keith Rourke
Victoria Ruetalo
Carolyn Sale
Susan Sommerfeldt
Eleni Stroulia
Kisha Supernant
Amy Tse
Alan Underhill
Mani Vaidyanathan
Akiko Watanabe
Jonathan White
Lynne Wiltse
Moin Yahya
Minn-Nyoung Yoon
Yan Yuan

Students:
David Draper
Katie Kidd
Sachiketha Reddy
Dilini Vethanayagam

Appointed Members:

Ricardo Acuna
Joel Agarwal
Susan Babcock
Paramita Chaudhuri Basu
Chris Beasley
Dhir Bid
Karl Buchanan
Daniela Carbajal
Meijun Chen
Megan Ciocchetto
André Costopoulos
Talia Dixon
Eric Einarson
Shannon Erichsen
Jennifer Fang
Shawn Flynn
Makboolee Fyith
Simran Ghoman
Shivani Gupta
Jill Hall
Simran Kaur Dhillon
Zaryab Khan
David Konrad
Janice Kung
Sharonne Lee
Habba Mahal
Angie Mandeville
Lucas Marques
Adekunle Mofolasayo
Abner Monteiro
Gaser Nagah
Ana Oliveira
Jacob Park
Nicole Patrie
Liam Pearce
Sarah Severson
Catrina Shellenberg
Aadhavya Sivakumaran
Lee Smith
Andrei Tabirca
Frederick Tappenden
Edward Tiet
Mansimran Virk

Adan Wang
Adrian Wattamaniuk
Donna Wilson
Adrienne Wright
Ding Xu

REGRETS:

Adarsh Badesha
Samar Barazesh
Amlan Bose
Marwan Burhani
Ashley Cardinal
Yiming Chen
Michael Dyck
Nicole de Grano
Bill Foster
Christian Fotang
Purna Hariharan
Emily Kimani
Harnoor Kochar
Rahul Korde
Devshri Lala
Emily Motoska
Yusuf Oliya
David Ren
Tyler Saretzky
Khandaker Akib Shahriar
Shahed Taghian
Dehaghani
Kristof Van Assche
Marc Waddingham
Xinxin Zhang
Francine (Yuheng) Zhou

Staff:

Brad Hamdon, General
Counsel and University
Secretary
Kate Peters, GFC
Secretary
Heather Richholt, Scribe
University Governance:
Ann Hodgson
Edyta McLoughlin
Laura Riley

OPENING SESSION

The Chair began the meeting with the following territorial acknowledgement:

The University of Alberta resides on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. This territory is a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples whose histories, languages and cultures continue to influence our community. To acknowledge the territory is to recognize the longer history of these lands. The acknowledgement signifies our commitment to working in Good Relations with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples as we engage in our institutional work, uplifting the whole people, for the University for Tomorrow.

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

Discussion:

The Chair noted that a member had submitted requests to extend the meeting, to change the order of the items on the agenda, and to add a motion to the agenda. He pointed out that it was up to GFC to decide if they should extend the meeting but that he was concerned that there were equity issues with the longer meetings of GFC as members who have family responsibilities could be disproportionately affected. The Chair also noted that GFC Executive had approved the agenda and there were important action items that GFC had deferred. As to adding a motion from the floor, the Chair explained that a two-thirds majority was required to add a motion for consideration when GFC had no notice of motion. The Chair also noted that he had heard from members that they wanted to spend less time on procedural matters and that the preferred way to bring items and motions to GFC was through the Executive Committee.

Motion: Sale/Acuna

Motion from the floor

THAT General Faculties Council amend the agenda to move Item 10 on performance metrics to precede the item on Clean Air Strategy.

DEFEATED

Motion: Doucet/Agarwal

THAT the General Faculties Council approve the agenda.

CARRIED

2. Report from the President (no documents)

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

Discussion:

In his comments, the Chair spoke about the recommendations of the Committee of the Whole from the February 8 meeting which were listed in the draft minutes. He noted the discussion item on metrics on the current agenda was a response to recommendation 1, and that he had committed to consult with the Board Chair about the suggestion for a joint Board-GFC committee in recommendation 2. He explained that the Executive Committee had struck an ad hoc Committee on Governance and Procedural Review which could be tasked with considering recommendations 3 and 4, and that he hoped that GFC would reaffirm its commitment to equal participation of members as suggested in recommendation 5, before the current cohort of students finished their mandate at the end of April. He noted that a more complete update would come to GFC at their meeting on March 22.

Andrew Sharman, Vice-President (Facilities and Operations) and executive lead of the university's COVID-19 response provided an update on planning for fall 2021 and winter 2022, he noted that the goal was to be in person as much as was feasible, and acknowledged the uncertainty of the vaccination rollout.

The Chair briefly mentioned the upcoming Board/GFC/Senate Summit, scheduled for March 26.

The Chair reported that the Advisory Search Committee for the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) had its first meeting at the end of January and that he would update GFC as the search progressed.

CONSENT AGENDA

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file

Consent Agenda Mover and Seconder: Yoon/Beier

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of January 25 and February 8, 2021

THAT General Faculties Council approve the Open Session Minutes of January 25 and February 8, 2021.

CARRIED

4. New Members of GFC

TO APPOINT:

The following undergraduate student representatives to serve on GFC for a term commencing February 22, 2021 and ending April 30, 2021:

Megan Ciocchetto	Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences (ALES)
Liam Pearce	Faculty of ALES

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5. Remote Learning

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic); Brad Hamdon, General Counsel and University Secretary; Wendy Rodgers, Deputy Provost; John Nychka, Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives); Helen Vallianatos, Associate Dean of Students

Purpose of the Proposal: This item is before GFC Exec to update the committee on actions taken by the University in response to concerns raised by students about the remote learning environment at the GFC meeting on January 25th.

Discussion:

The Chair acknowledged the important discussion on remote learning at the January 25 meeting of GFC and noted that Provost Dew and his team were here to update GFC on their work in this area. He also noted that General Counsel and University Secretary, Brad Hamdon was ready to speak to GFC about the legal and policy framework surrounding this issue. He spoke about the discussion at the Executive Committee meeting on February 10 and indicated the committee had included three comments in the Governance Executive Summary for Item 6 indicating the Provost's Taskforce should be guided by three motions recommended by COSA whether or not they were passed by GFC.

Dr Dew expressed that a whole community response was needed for dealing with the shift to remote delivery and he understood that the solutions that were developed had not worked for everyone, as made clear by the student members of GFC on January 25. He indicated that the Taskforce had been working to find better solutions for both instructors and students.

Dr Nychka and Dr Vallianatos, co-chairs of the Provost's taskforce, spoke about the work of the taskforce working group and advisory group to address immediate issues as well as longer-term priorities. They noted that the COSA motions were influencing their directives.

Mr Hamdon noted that any decisions made by GFC were subject to law and policy. He then provided an overview of the policy framework and legal requirements that the University must navigate when implementing decisions on remote teaching and learning including, but not limited to:

- the University's Duty to accommodate as set out in the UAPPOL Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy suite;
- the protections of academic freedom set out in the University's collective agreements
- the need to protect privacy and personal information of students and instructors as set out in the UAPPOL Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Policy suite;
- the requirements and provisions for course syllabi set out in Evaluation and Grading Procedure in the University Calendar;
- the copyright protections in instructor course content as set out in the UAPPOL Use of Copyright Materials Policy suite; and
- the need to comply with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy legislation.

During the discussion, members asked questions and expressed comments including but not limited to:

- whether any changes, decisions, or outcomes would come back to GFC;
- how the Dean of Students and Centre for Teaching and Learning would provide support and share strategies;
- that Faculties and Departments had a role to play in developing discipline specific strategies; and
- the role of the Office of the Dean of Students to coordinate academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

ACTION ITEMS

6. Synchronous and Online Proctoring in Winter 2021

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Chanpreet Singh, President of the International Students' Association (ISA) and Appointed Student Representative on COSA

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal is before the General Faculties Council (GFC) to explore alternatives and resolve issues related to synchronous online learning.

Discussion:

Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair of Council on Student Affairs (COSA) acknowledged the leadership of the ISA and the Students' Union (SU) in addressing concerns related to remote teaching and learning. He noted that there was broad agreement at COSA for the need to address these concerns.

Mr Singh presented the motions and spoke about the challenges with synchronous learning for students who had poor internet connectivity, who lived in different time zones, or who had care responsibilities, and asked GFC to support alternatives for these students. He observed that the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to

move to remote delivery had caused challenges for instructors and students and that the community needed to work together to find solutions.

During the discussion, members asked questions and expressed comments including but not limited to:

- a concern that there had been no consultation with faculty members or the Association of Academic Staff of the University of Alberta (AASUA);
- an observation about the power differential between students and faculty and that these motions were made in good faith to bring student concerns to GFC;
- physical and mental health concerns for students who live in other time zones but who have synchronous learning components to their programs;
- an opinion that synchronous delivery was essential to many courses and disciplines;
- a strong expression of support for the motions because they allow for flexibility to find the best solution for everyone;
- a suggestion for how to amend the wording of the motions to ask the taskforce to take on this work;
- a comment that GFC was a legislative body and should be taking legislative action that could be followed;
- an opinion that the motions were a commitment by GFC to students;
- whether the motions would have an impact on policy or whether they were GFC's advice and a show of support for students who were suffering; and
- that any motions made by GFC would be subject to the university's policy and legal framework.

During the discussion, a motion was made from the floor to extend the meeting by 30 minutes.

Motion: Babcock/Kidd

Motion from the floor

THAT the General Faculties Council extend the meeting until 4:30 p.m.

CARRIED

Motion: Marques/Bid

THAT General Faculties Council recommend that the Provost Task force on Remote Teaching & Learning make appropriate provision for alternative delivery of lectures accessible to students in courses who cannot attend synchronous components, not including exams, until in-person delivery resumes.

CARRIED

Motion: Marques/Bid

THAT General Faculties Council recommend an appropriate alternative way of completing the course for students facing synchronous learning accessibility challenges, such as, and not limited to, students who parent, students studying in a different time zone or having a poor internet connection, from the participation grade/weightage that is based on attendance or activities requiring students to participate synchronously, until in-person delivery resumes.

CARRIED

Motion: Marques/Bid

THAT General Faculties Council recommend that the Provost Task force on Remote Teaching & Learning explore alternatives and resolve the concerns/issues related to synchronous online learning, until in-person delivery resumes.

CARRIED

7. Proposed Rescission of GFC Policy 37 and Consideration of the GFC Programs Committee Terms of Reference

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Brad Hamdon, General Counsel and University Secretary; Kate Peters, GFC Secretary and Manager of GFC Services

Purpose of the Proposal: The proposal to rescind GFC Policy 37 is the final step in the reorganization of program approval processes.

Discussion:

The Chair reminded members that this item was on the September and October agendas of GFC and deferred to allow for time to discuss academic restructuring. He noted that when GFC deferred the item on October 19th there was a motion to table this item until a later meeting when GFC would have the opportunity to consider whether they wished to revise the GFC Programs Committee (PC) Terms of Reference.

Mr Hamdon spoke about the 15 year project to decommission the GFC Policy Manual and noted that there were several other sections that would be coming forward for rescission in the coming months.

Ms Peters noted that there was a conflict regarding the approval of course and minor program changes since there were different processes outlined in Policy 37 and in the Terms of Reference of PC. She explained that this conflict had been managed by essentially following both processes since September 2020. She acknowledged that GFC had asked that they be given the opportunity to discuss the PC Terms of Reference, before this Rescission was approved and that there were concerns raised about the delegated authority to allow PC to approve on behalf of GFC the introduction and modification of new academic programs and the termination of academic programs. Ms Peters noted that PC had discussed their authority at the November 2020 meeting and the impact of recommending to GFC rather than approving items. The Chair reported to Executive Committee on outcomes of that discussion at their January 11 meeting. Ms Peters further explained that these were not new delegations of authority and that PC was created to streamline and add clarity to the program approval process. The committee holds authorities that were previously held by the Academic Planning Committee (APC), the Academic Standards Committee, and the Executive Committee, as well as the process for course and minor program changes outlined in GFC Policy 37. She also noted that program changes that were considered to be substantive changes for the University, including new credentials and suspension of admission to existing programs, would continue to come to APC and then to GFC for recommendation to the Board and then to the Ministry for final approval. Finally, she emphasized the role of Faculty Councils in program approvals and noted that course and program changes, creation of new programs, suspensions and terminations all required Faculty Council approval before they could be considered by PC.

A member expressed concern that this was streamlining program terminations. Ms Peters explained that the program suspension was the more significant decision and the pathway for that approval was Faculty Council, PC, APC, GFC, Board, and then the Ministry. She further explained that once suspension was approved there was typically a 5-year teach out period before that program came back for termination and that the eventual termination of the program was a much less substantive decision.

A member suggested that PC composition could be reevaluated to include equal academic staff representation across the colleges.

A member asked why GFC had not had the opportunity to revise the PC terms of reference as set forth in the motion of October 19. She noted that program approvals were the core work of GFC and that the consent agenda at GFC could be used for these approvals. She proposed amending the motion to make that change.

The Chair asked Ms Peters for advice on the proposed amendment to the motion and she responded that the motion before members was to rescind GFC Policy 37 and that the proposed amendment concerning the GFC PC delegated authorities was not germane to the motion. The Chair accepted this advice.

A member made a motion from the floor to end debate and call the question.

Motion: Babcock/Doucet

Motion from the floor

THAT General Faculties Council call the question.

CARRIED

Motion: Doucet/Sharman

THAT the General Faculties Council rescind GFC Policy Manual Section 37.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

8. Clean Air Strategy

Materials and presentation before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Andrew Sharman, Vice-President (Facilities and Operations); Andrew Leitch, Internal Audit and Risk Management; Kevin Friese, Assistant Dean, Health and Wellness, Student Services

Purpose of the Proposal: In response to a General Faculties Council motion, to present to GFC a proposed Clean Air Strategy to confirm it meets its goals and expectations prior to a recommendation to the Board of Governors.

Discussion:

Mr Friese and Mr Leitch gave a presentation on the Clean Air Working Group that was struck in fall 2018 in response to a motion by GFC to develop a clean air strategy and its recommendation that the University of Alberta prohibit smoking and vaping of all products on all campuses effective September 1, 2021. Although the prohibition would apply to university residences, there would be exemptions for ceremonial use.

A motion from the floor was made to extend the meeting by 15 minutes.

A member read the following statement from the Aboriginal Student Council Executive:

Indigenous Peoples have a long and storied history of the use of tobacco. Tobacco is one of the sacred plants that the Creator has endowed upon us; considered to be a sacred medicine, it has been used in ceremonies by our peoples across Turtle Island long before contact with Europeans. We hold the belief that tobacco establishes a direct communication link between a person and the spiritual world with our Creator. Tobacco is a traditional gift that we exchange when we gift our knowledge to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people alike.

While it is important to note the difference between traditional and non-traditional tobacco usage, a complete blanket ban of “smoking and vaping of all products on all campuses” has the potential to harm Indigenous students at a disproportionate level. We recognize and understand that this proposal is given with the public health of students and everyone on campus in mind. We ask you to consider the historical context where settler peoples created an environment where Indigenous Peoples have turned to addictive substances to cope with generational trauma. We also share some security concerns for our

students, particularly Indigenous students who identify as women and Two-Spirited peoples, who would be forced to leave campus for nicotine usage.

Ceremony is important to Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous students, and we frequently use tobacco for such purposes. We strongly urge the General Faculties Council to consider the unique situation that Indigenous students face in relation to tobacco usage on campus. Furthermore we also urge this committee to consider the impacts on Indigenous students and to pursue alternative avenues of approach to fix this important health issue. We recommend that the General Faculties Council vote for two of the proposed options; that being that (a) Nothing changes or (b) That tobacco usage be permitted in certain areas.

The Aboriginal Student Council is not afraid to use its political capital in order to stand up and represent our students' needs and views wherever and whatever they may be.

Members discussed:

- concern about enforcement of a total ban and those who were disproportionately targeted by police and campus security;
- concern that this would further marginalize some individuals;
- that exceptions would be made for ceremonial use of tobacco;
- concerns related to respiratory diseases and how those individuals are disproportionately affected by second hand smoke;
- that smoking was not a choice but an addiction;
- that more supports for mental health issues including addiction were needed; and
- that public health research showed that a total ban would help prevent people from developing addictions.

The Chair noted that this item was not before GFC for a decision at this time and would be back for action at a later date.

Motion: Sharman/Vethanayagam

Motion from the floor

THAT the General Faculties Council extend the meeting until 4:45 p.m.

CARRIED

9. Integrated Asset Management Strategy (IAMS) Update

Item was deferred.

10. Development of a GFC Position on Metrics Associated with Academic Restructuring

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

As the meeting was already at the time set for adjournment, a motion was made from the floor to refer the item to the GFC Academic Planning Committee. A member objected to the motion being made after the extension of the meeting had expired. The Chair proceeded with the motion to refer and after the motion passed, the meeting was immediately adjourned.

Motion: Doucet/Dew

Motion from the floor

THAT General Faculties Council refer Item 10: Development of a GFC Position on Metrics Associated with Academic Restructuring to the Academic Planning Committee and that it be brought back to GFC for further discussion.

CARRIED

11. Question Period

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

- 11.2 Question and Response on Lab Closure
- 11.3 Question and Response on Metrics
- 11.4 Question and Response on Written Questions
- 11.5 Question and Response on College Dean Position Description
- 11.6 Question and Response on Role of Chair
- 11.7 Question and Response on Board Training
- 11.8 Question and Response on Remote Learning

INFORMATION REPORTS

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

- 12. Report of the GFC Executive Committee
- 13. Report of the GFC Academic Planning Committee
- 14. Report of the GFC Programs Committee
- 15. GFC Nominations and Elections
 - A. Current Membership Vacancies
 - B. Report of the GFC Nominating Committee
- 16. COVID-19 Governance Decision Tracker
- 17. Information Items
 - A. Annual Undergraduate Enrolment Report 2020-2021
 - B. Report on the Isolation Accommodations Program
- 18. Information Forwarded to GFC Members Between Meetings
 - Announcement concerning the Dean of Engineering
 - Invitation to the Joint Board/GFC/Senate Summit
 - Acting Deans - School of Business and Faculty of Nursing(2021-01-29)
 - Amended Meeting Materials - January 25 and February 8, 2021
 - Additional item and registration for GFC - Monday, February 8, 2021

CLOSING SESSION

- 19. Adjournment
 - Next Meeting of General Faculties Council: March 22, 2021

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:55 p.m.