

General Faculties Council
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, November 20, 2023
Council Chamber, 2-100 University Hall
2:00 - 4:00 p.m

OPENING SESSION

The Chair began with a land acknowledgement:

The University of Alberta acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, and respects the histories, languages, and cultures of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.

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 General Faculties Council (GFC)

Discussion: The Chair invited R Dunch to speak to Item 6, a Notice of Motion concerning Budget Model 2.0. R Dunch noted that he had made a Notice of Motion at the September, 2023 meeting of GFC and noted that Vice-President Finance and Administration and the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) had made more information available to GFC and as a consequence he was asking for his motion to be withdrawn from the proposed agenda.

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT General Faculties Council approve the agenda as amended.

CARRIED

2. Remarks from the Chair (no documents)

- Staff Engagement Survey
- People Strategy
- Campus Food Bank

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

Discussion: The Chair began by reading the following prepared statement:

I want to acknowledge the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. This is a difficult time for the world and a difficult time for the university.

I think I can speak for all of us when I say the daily news is heartbreaking to read. I grieve for all of those affected by this crisis. With so many members of our community having family, friends and colleagues in the region, I know that many in our community are personally deeply affected by this ongoing conflict.

We are a diverse community with members from across Canada and around the world. Many members of our community have strongly held views about the causes of this conflict and who bears the responsibility for this conflict.

I would sincerely ask that we approach one another with empathy, compassion, and a willingness to engage in respectful and thoughtful dialogue.

A university must be a place of open inquiry and debate. With such divergent views on our campuses, it is not the role of university administrators, myself included, to purport to render judgment on this conflict or make findings of fact relating to the conflict. Instead, our role is to do all we can to ensure the safety of our community and foster, as best we can, the conditions for respectful dialogue.

This will not be easy in the days ahead. I and my senior colleagues - including the provost, VP's and deans - will continue to do all we can to foster open inquiry and respectful debate. I ask that you join us as we work together as a community through this difficult time, always keeping our core values of respect and compassion for one another front and centre.

The Chair then transitioned members attention to his report whose content includes:

- the launch of *Forward with Purpose, a Strategic Plan for Research and Innovation*, and the alignment with *SHAPE*, the University Strategic Plan;
- an update on global rankings;
- an update on the search for a new Provost and Vice-President (Academic); and
- the results of the faculty and staff engagement survey

Noting the link between the survey results and an initiative to develop a People Strategy, the Chair asked Interim Provost and Vice-President (Academic) V Yiu and Vice-President (University Services and Finance) T Gilchrist to update GFC. V Yiu noted that there were already several elements in place including the Culture of Care and forthcoming Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy. She expressed a hope that the strategy would support the University's goals and asked members to engage with the process.

The Chair resumed his remarks by asking members to think about how they might support the Campus Food Bank, noting the possibility of unit-level food drives, volunteering, monetary donations, or sponsoring the campus pantry for a week. He thanked J Harding-Kuringer and A McGee for moving and seconding the action items on the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of October 16th, 2023

THAT General Faculties Council approve the open session minutes of October 16th, 2023

CARRIED

4. New Members of GFC

TO APPOINT:

The following undergraduate student representatives to serve on GFC for terms commencing immediately and ending April 30, 2024:

Katherine Tamsett	Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences
Harvir Sandhu	Faculty of Arts
Minhaal Akbar	Faculty of Arts
Alyssa Burant	Faculty of Business

CARRIED

5. Time in Program While on Leave, Faculty of Graduate and Post-doctoral Studies

THAT General Faculties Council approve the changes to regulations regarding Graduate Student time in program while on leave, for implementation upon final approval, and inclusion in the 2024-2025 Calendar.

CARRIED

ACTION ITEMS

7. Student Experience Action Plan

Presenter(s): Melissa Padfield, Deputy Provost (Students and Enrolment); Christian Fotang, President, University of Alberta Students' Union; Tiffany Kung, Vice-President (Student Life), Graduate Students' Association

Discussion: M Padfield invited co-presenters C Fotang and T Kung to present on the Student Experience Action Plan (SEAP). They noted that SEAP includes core aspects of the student experience and that student members of the University community had supported the co-creation of the plan. M Padfield emphasized that this was a living plan and that it would continue to evolve. The presenters covered some short term objectives for SEAP including academic advising, experiential learning, online learning, transparency around costs of learning, safety, support on career planning, accessibility, space available to students, opportunities for student participation and connections between students and faculty. M Padfield spoke to accountability for implementation through a dashboard and C Fotang presented the Draft Accountability Framework. T Kung noted that the framework was also a call to action and encouraged students to ask themselves how they could take action.

Members offered their congratulations and discussed:

- Differentiating between career management and career planning;
- Opportunities for creation of student spaces in different buildings on Campus, specifically in the Tory building;
- Possibilities for experiential learning to include research opportunities and how work-integrated learning is covered by SEAP;
- The value of small student spaces and challenges posed by access, especially elevators that don't work;
- Whether accessibility is being considered in experiential learning planning, and the difficulties that students with disabilities might face in securing accommodations or to access study abroad opportunities; and
- Concerns about students-who-parent being able to access opportunities described in SEAP

THAT General Faculties Council endorse the Student Experience Action Plan Themes and Goals and key actions, as described in attachments.

CARRIED

8. Integrated Asset Management Strategy

Presenter(s): Andrew Sharman, Vice-President (Facilities and Operations)

Discussion: A Sharman reminded members that the Integrated Asset Management Strategy had been approved in 2019 and that a refresh to the plan was necessitated by the approval of SHAPE as well as numerous legislative changes brought by the Government of Alberta. He noted that the Board of Governors had encouraged the development of an Asset Management Master Plan (AMMP) which would be coming back to GFC for discussion and would include details on how space would be managed. He pointed to the goals and principles in the IAMS that are key to setting a vision, providing the example of accommodation as a strategic guiding goal.

Members commented on the value of refreshing the plan given the important changes to the organizational structure at the University. They noted that the IAMS update includes several references to undeveloped lands and asked about the decision-making process for developing these lands and how impacts on research would be assessed.

THAT the General Faculties Council recommend the refreshed Integrated Asset Management Strategy, as set out in Attachment 1, to the Board of Governors for approval

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

9. Question Period

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

Discussion: Members asked about the recent statements made about peace protests organized by students and other groups expressing concerns about stigmatization, student and campus safety, and the importance of freedom of expression.

Members asked about issues raised by the Francophone community concerning Campus Saint-Jean. The Chair noted that the Dean of Faculté Saint-Jean, J Carey, was not available to answer the questions and asked if the member wanted to note their questions for the record. The member agreed to submit the questions for the January meeting.

Members asked follow-up questions on the response concerning variables in the Maclean's Rankings and whether these were areas that were being pursued by the University (e.g. marketing). Members further commented that the University knows best how to drive the mission of the university and asked whether pursuing rankings was the university strategy. SHAPE was highlighted as a reference for evidence of the University's strategic direction.

10. Report on Student Financial Support and PhD Minimum Guaranteed Funding

Presenter(s): Norma Rodenburg, Acting Vice-Provost and University Registrar; Tracy Raivio, Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate and Post-doctoral Studies; Roger Epp, Special Advisor to the Provost

Discussion: N Rodenburg presented the Student Financial Support report and described the break-down between merit-based, need-based and hybrid financial supports. She noted the shared responsibility for funding between the University, the student and government. T Raivio provided an overview of graduate awards and bursaries. N Rodenburg described the work of the Advisory Group on Moderate Standard of Living and Bursary Applications.

T Raivio and R Epp described work to develop a PhD Minimum Funding Operating Standard to ensure equity, strengthen our recruitment profile, and mitigate financial barriers experienced by students. He noted the provisional number for the guarantee as \$25,000 and the issues with the word 'guarantee', given that in many cases, this is already current practice. He noted the specific challenges of ensuring financial security for international students and emphasized this initiative shouldn't come from individual researchers and Principal Investigators (PIs). He explained the proposed strategy of using the offer letter and existing administrative systems and articulated a goal of implementing in Fall, 2025 and spoke to the possibility of creating a back-stop fund.

Members expressed broad support for the proposal and discussed:

- Whether planning considered the needs of Graduate Research Assistants who are dependent on public funding;

- Differentiating between funding for research and funding for student supports;
- How to support PIs who don't have the funds to guarantee minimum funding;
- Whether there were differences between Alberta and other provinces due to the relative success of other institutions in securing Tri Council grant funding;
- Whether funds can be tabulated from Graduate Teaching Assistantships as a part of the guarantee;
- The possibility of using faculty-level carry-forward funds or university-level strategic initiative funds to support this program;
- How course-based masters' students would be supported through the proposal;
- How much students need and that a higher amount may be required given cost-of living and inflation;
- Whether there had been a perceivable impact in the data due to the slow processing of student loans in Alberta in 2023;
- The diversity of contexts across the university and strategies to cover shortfalls;
- Whether student expectations could be managed;
- The inability to guarantee government funding and the impacts to the PhD minimum funding regime if amounts allocated depend on public sources; and
- That while post-doctoral students are not covered by the proposal, they should be at some point; and
- How tuition for international students compares to competitor tuition rates and whether information on practices elsewhere to support students could be provided to GFC members.

11. Understanding Financial Realities: An Analysis of the Financial Condition among UofA Graduate Students Report

Presenter(s): Bishoi Aziz, President, Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

Discussion: B Aziz presented the findings of research conducted by the GSA describing respondent demographics and the trends identified. He emphasized the challenges identified in the data especially housing, transportation, and childcare and pointed members to the statistics on the number of students who had considered leaving their studies in the past year. Concerning financial background, he cautioned members against concluding that international students had a healthy financial status pointing to statistics on use of the Campus Food Bank. He also noted that the Campus Food Bank only solves one issue faced by students. He described the themes that emerged from the qualitative responses and shared some troubling examples of student strategies to support themselves and their families. He concluded by noting the impact on student mental health and pointed to the discrepancy in course-based masters (CBM) students' experiences who tend to fall into the cracks. He encouraged members to consider this in light of plans to increase CBM enrolment and international student recruitment.

Given the limited time, there were no questions.

12. Updated Non-Credit/Micro-Credential Framework and Non-Credit MicroCredential Development Guide

Presenter(s): Jessica Butts Scott, Associate Vice-President, Online and Continuing Professional Education; Janice Causgrove Dunn, Vice=Provost (Programs)

Discussion: J Causgrove Dunn shared the proposed updates for the NCCF and the Non-Credit MicroCredial Development Guide. She emphasized that this proposal relates to non-credit offerings, in contrast to the Undergraduate Embedded Certificate framework approved last year.

She noted that there had been external engagement with colleagues in other research universities and described the updates to the framework. J Butts Scott noted that the Framework targets development of microcredentials for working professionals looking to boost their skills for employment progression. She described the aim of the Framework to support units across the university in developing non-credit offerings by clarifying definitions and through guidance on the necessary steps to create micro credentials.

Members asked:

- How credentialing non-credit offerings will be recognised and offered going forward, especially for community partners who participate in events or activities but may not want to ladder; and
- How certificates will ladder into graduate programs and the balance between credit and non-credit to create pathways to for credit programs.

13. Introduction of a new Learning Management System of the Future

Presenter(s): Karsten Mündel, Vice-Provost, Learning Initiatives; Jessica Butts Scott, Associate Vice-President, Online and Continuing Professional Education

Discussion: K Mundel encouraged members to review the shortlisted LMS providers who will be presenting on December 7th and asked for feedback on which platform would best meet the needs of students, faculties and staff. He noted this was the next step in a consultation process.

There were no questions.

INFORMATION REPORTS

[If a member has a question about a report, or feels that a report should be discussed by GFC, they should notify the Secretary to GFC, in writing, two business days or more in advance of the meeting so that the Committee Chair (or relevant expert) can be invited to attend.]

14. Report of the GFC Executive Committee

15. Report of the GFC Academic Planning Committee

17. Report of the Council on Student Affairs (COSA)

16. Report of the GFC Programs Committee

18. Report of the GFC Nominating Committee

20. Report of the President

20. Report of the Board of Governors

21. Information Forwarded to GFC Members Between Meetings
- Budget Model 2.0 Information and Discussion Sessions

CLOSING SESSION

22. Adjournment

23. Next Meeting of General Faculties Council: January 29th, 2024

ATTENDEES:

Bill Flanagan, Chair Verna Yiu, Vice-Chair Simaan AbouRizk Adetola Adesida Sandeep Agrawal Minhaal Akbar Wajid Ali Pedro Almeida Chris Andersen Damon Atwood Bishoi Aziz Jill Bagwe Quinn Benders Barbara Billingsley Stanford Blade Josh Boissonnault Angelina Botros Ahmed Bouferguene Marsha Boyd Paige Boyer Jennifer Branch-Mueller Heather Bruce Jessica Butts Scott Susan Chatwood Jency Chhaiya Odile Cisneros Gavin Clark Chathuranga De Silva Stephanie Dickie Bailey Dickie Ryan Dunch Duncan Elliott Carlos Fernandez-Patron Shawn Flynn Kyle Foster Christian Fotang Zachary Friggstad Megan Garbutt Kenneth Gariepy Todd Gilchrist Douglas Gingrich Eva Glancy Douglas Gleddie Goswami Lise Gotell Michael Griffiths Jodi Harding-Kuriger	Michael Hendzel Tammy Hopper Tracy Howlett Jun Hu Christine Hughes Matina Kalcounis- Rueppell Rija Kamran Esther Kim Noel Kjemhus Tim Klassen Julia Kloet Hal Kohestani Valentina Kozlova Vadim Kravchinsky Diane Kunyk Denise LaFitte Adrian Lam Pierre Lemelin Jinfeng Liu Christopher Lupke Ola Mabrouk Elan MacDonald Nikolai Malykhin Andrew McGee Vikas Mehrotra Danielle Milln Aamir Mohamed Weimin Mou Jennifer Passey Nathan Perez Sujata Persad Elena Posse de Chaves Spencer Proctor Kyra Pyke Muneeba QaDir Tracy Raivio Christian Reyns-Chikuma Liam Richardson Norma Rodenburg Kent Rondeau Ravina Sanghera Mikael Schmidtke Andrew Sharman Patricia Sherbaniuk Allison Sivak John Spence Chris Sprysak	Tom Stelfox Gordon Swaters Katherine Tamsett Nathan Thiessen Reagan Tremblay Demetres Tryphonopoulos John Ussher Dilini Vethanayagam Madison Villiger Liam Watt Robert Wood Richard Wozniak Minn-Nyoung Yoon Tuesday Young <u>REGRETS</u> Noor Abdelwahab Seun Akinfolarin Layla Alhussainy Hussain Alhussainy Declan Ali Saadet Andrews Gabriel Ayoku Alyssa Burant Jason Carey Marie Carrière Pierre Chue Greta Cummings Chetan Dave Bipro Dhar Maesha Elm Elahi Richard Field Julianne Gibbs-Davis Taylor Good Shubham Goswami Magda Grzeszczuk Brenda Hemmelgarn Carol Hodgson Birkman Jelena Holovati Spencer Hoppe John Hu Jeff Johnson Zak Kaal Sandeep Kumar Corrine Langinier Liran Levin	Divya Maisuriya Precious Majekodunmi Shivani Mandal Olena Mykhailenko Pauline Paul Graham Pearson Bassem Raad Stephen Raitz Aminah Robinson Fayek (delegate) Dan Romanyk Aiman Saif Frederick Tappenden Aditya Tutika Marvin Washington Yifeng Wei Lindsey Westover Shauna Wilton <u>GOVERNANCE STAFF:</u> John Lemieux, University Secretary Kate Peters, GFC Secretary Faiza Bill Erin Plume Juli Zinken
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