

**Governance Executive Summary
Advice, Discussion, Information Item**

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Agenda Title | Report of the GFC Ad Hoc Committee for the Formal Review of Academic Restructuring |
|---------------------|---|

Item

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Proposed by | Heather Coleman, Elected Faculty Member GFC, Arts, and Professor, Department of History, Classics, and Religion; Sue-Ann Mok, Assistant Professor, Biochemistry, Medicine & Dentistry |
| Presenter | Heather Coleman & Sue- Ann Mok |

Details

| | |
|--|---|
| Office of Administrative Responsibility | General Faculties Council |
| The Purpose of the Proposal is (please be specific) | To discuss the Report of the GFC Ad Hoc Committee for the Formal Review of Academic Restructuring |
| Executive Summary <i>(outline the specific item – and remember your audience)</i> | <p>On February 8, 2021, the issue of collegial governance in light of the December events at General Faculties Council (GFC) and the Board of Governors was referred to a committee of the whole. The Committee recommended that:</p> <p align="center">“there be a formal review of the consultations and action processes for academic restructuring in the Fall of 2020. The goal of the review would be to make recommendations to improve communication and decision-making processes of the GFC and the University going forward. The review should be conducted by a group elected by GFC and report to the GFC and the Board of Governors.”</p> <p>On June 10, GFC approved the Terms of Reference for the GFC <i>ad hoc</i> Review Committee and the committee was convened in October, 2021 and the chair has been reporting to GFC Executive Committee and GFC regularly.</p> <p>The final report of the GFC Ad Hoc Committee for the Formal Review of Academic Restructuring includes an overview of the work of the committee and a summary of what committee members learned including the issues they identified. The report concludes with recommendations for planning of future consultation, and regarding GFC and its role.</p> |
| Supplementary Notes and context | <i>During their conversation on this item, members of Executive Committee expressed a desire to ensure that the recommendations were operationalized in a way that is tangible. They specifically discussed the need for the Executive Sub-committee on Governance and Procedural Oversight (GPO) to review the report and to report back to Executive Committee on a plan to move forward on the recommendations. That plan could then be presented back to GFC.</i> |

Engagement and Routing (Include proposed plan)

Item No. 13

| | |
|--|--|
| Consultation and Stakeholder Participation | <p><u><i>Those who are actively participating:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heather Coleman (Chair), Professor, Department of History, Classics, and Religion, Arts • Sue-Ann Mok (Vice Chair), Assistant Professor, Biochemistry, Medicine & Dentistry • Marsha Boyd, NASA Representative to GFC • Kyle Foster, NASA Representative to GFC • Kathy Haddadkar, Graduate Student Representative to GFC, Department of Music, Arts • Adrian Wattamaniuk, Undergraduate Student Representative to GFC, Engineering <p><u><i>Those who have been consulted:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secretary to General Faculties Council - Chief of Staff, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) - University of Alberta experts in consultation and institutional change management - Members of the Academic Restructuring Working Group - Selected Faculty Deans - Selected Chairs <p><u><i>Those who have been informed:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members of the GFC Executive Committee (October 4, November 15, 2021, January 10, February 14, 2022) - Members of General Faculties Council (December 6, 2021, January 31, February 28, 2022) |
|--|--|

Strategic Alignment

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Alignment with <i>For the Public Good</i> | Please note the Institutional Strategic Plan objective(s)/strategies the proposal supports. | |
| Alignment with Core Risk Area | Please note below the specific institutional risk(s) this proposal is addressing. | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Enrolment Management <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty and Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Funding and Resource Management <input type="checkbox"/> IT Services, Software and Hardware <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership and Change <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Infrastructure | <input type="checkbox"/> Relationship with Stakeholders <input type="checkbox"/> Reputation <input type="checkbox"/> Research Enterprise <input type="checkbox"/> Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Student Success |
| Legislative Compliance and jurisdiction | GFC Terms of Reference | |

Attachments (each to be numbered 1 - <>)

1. Report of the GFC Ad Hoc Committee for the Formal Review of Academic Restructuring (Pages 1-12)
2. Terms of Reference GFC Ad Hoc Committee for the Formal Review of Academic Restructuring

 Prepared by: Kate Peters, peters3@ualberta.ca

Report of the GFC *Ad Hoc* Committee for the Formal Review of Academic Restructuring

March 2, 2022

Executive Summary

The Committee reviewed materials related to consultations on Academic Restructuring on the University of Alberta for Tomorrow website, the minutes and materials of GFC, GFC Executive Committee, and APC, as well as Academic Restructuring Working Group meeting materials. It also interviewed members of the university community involved with the process and experts in consultation and change management.

Consultation activities in summer and fall 2020 were extensive, reaching an unprecedented number of community members. They shaped the resulting proposals in several ways, including the ARWG's shift away from amalgamating faculties to grouping them, incorporating the idea of a College of Arts and Science in proposals, and fine-tuning the final college model recommendation.

Our review revealed, however, the following weaknesses in the consultation, which affected the university community's experience and GFC's perception of its ability to play a meaningful role in decision-making:

- the purpose and scope of the consultation was poorly defined
- roles and authority in decision-making were unclear
- separating SET from the Academic Restructuring process hampered GFC's ability to see the full picture when making its final recommendations
- the priority of academic motivations in the academic restructuring project was unclear
- GFC was underutilized as a site for consultation and thus was unable to fully perform its decision-making role

The experience of Fall 2020 demonstrated that GFC cannot be a decision-making body without also maintaining a central role in the development of proposals for major academic change. Therefore, the Committee recommends a number of steps for better consultation conceptualization and planning, and linking these to decision-making processes. It further proposes measures to clarify and reassert GFC's decision-making role in bicameral collegial governance and to ensure that the voice of GFC is heard by the Board of Governors. To ensure GFC's ability to act as a deliberative body for future major decisions, the Committee recommends:

- 1) that GFC members elect a working group to represent them within consultation and decision-making processes even when GFC is not meeting
- 2) that GFC membership be a criterion for selecting members of future advisory/steering groups
- 3) that GFC hold special meetings organized in a way which will allow members to purposefully interact and deliberate, thereby contributing to the elaboration of solutions;
- 4) that GFC be provided with all information that it deems necessary for effective decision making, eschewing any rigid categorization of academic and administrative matters

Our Mandate

On June 7, 2021, General Faculties Council formed the GFC *Ad Hoc* Committee for the Formal Review of Academic Restructuring. The Committee's mandate, as set out in the Report of the Committee of the Whole of February 8, 2021, is as follows:

"That GFC Recommends there be a formal review of the consultations and action processes for academic restructuring in the Fall of 2020. The goal of the review would be to make recommendations to improve communication and decision-making processes of the GFC and the University going forward. The review should be conducted by a group elected by GFC and report to the GFC and the Board of Governors."

Composition of the Committee

Following a call from the GFC Nominating Committee, the following members were appointed:

Heather Coleman (Chair), Professor, Department of History, Classics, and Religion, Arts

Sue-Ann Mok (Vice Chair), Assistant Professor, Biochemistry, Medicine & Dentistry

Marsha Boyd, NASA Representative to GFC

Kyle Foster, NASA Representative to GFC

Kathy Haddadkar, Graduate Student Representative to GFC, Department of Music, Arts

Adrian Wattamaniuk, Undergraduate Student Representative to GFC, Engineering

What We Did

In accordance with our terms of reference, the Committee initially undertook a review of the following documentary materials:

- the University of Alberta for Tomorrow website, focusing on the Consultation tab (including Town Halls, Pulse Surveys, Thought Exchange Reports and UAT summaries of Thought Exchange).
- Minutes and materials of GFC, GFC Executive Committee, and Academic Programs Committee for January 2020 - January 2021
- Academic Restructuring Working Group meeting materials, April 22 to December 18, 2020, including timelines, communication plan, student consultation summary

In order to better contextualize these materials, to understand the consultation and decision-making processes, and to gather advice while considering our recommendations, the Committee also conducted 16 interviews with members of the University community at large, as well as those involved in the Academic Restructuring process – including faculty members and administrators – of whom 10 were members of the ARWG. We notified all interviewees that their comments would remain confidential and would not be quoted directly in the report. Committee members took detailed notes of the conversations, for the exclusive use of the committee.

GFC Secretary Kate Peters provided additional advice and materials, as did the Provost's Chief of Staff, Kathleen Brough throughout this process.

To facilitate our assessment of the alignment of our institution's restructuring and consultation process with established standards in the field, we also interviewed 4 University of Alberta experts in consultation and institutional change management. These experts also provided counsel for the proposed recommendations included in this report.

Although our mandate was to review consultation and action processes in the Fall term 2020, we quickly discovered that these interactions could not be understood apart from the longer process of Academic Restructuring, which was launched in Winter 2020. Therefore, the committee sought to gather and examine evidence relating to 2020 as a whole.

Several key questions which our committee posed include:

- how was the consultation planned, what were its stated goals, and what was the plan for using the information it revealed?

- what was the role of the ARWG in the process of AR?
- how did consultation lead to the proposed models presented in September 2020?
- how did consultation serve to revise the models proposed in September and presented to GFC in November 2020?
- how was the role of GFC understood by the various participants?

The Committee as a whole met 12 times between October 22, 2021 and March 1, 2022; furthermore, teams of 2-3 members conducted the aforementioned interviews.

Committee Chair Heather Coleman provided regular updates on the work of the Committee to GFC and the GFC Executive Committee between October 2021 and March 2022.

What We Learned

The General Faculties Council's involvement with academic restructuring began at GFC's March 30, 2020 meeting. President David Turpin informed the community that, following the announcement of stringent cuts to the Campus Alberta grant in the February provincial budget, "fundamental restructuring will be required and we must be prepared to consider all options." The first meeting of the Academic Restructuring Working Group occurred shortly after on April 22, 2020.

Documentation from the first ARWG meeting revealed that senior administration had already formed a clear opinion that Australian universities were exemplary models for restructuring initiatives that enhanced efficiencies without causing a detrimental impact on global rankings. Based on these models, an argument was presented that favoured a consolidation of faculties and departments to achieve savings through economies of scale. Committee members considered a document dated January 2020 that presented preliminary comparisons of academic structures at Canadian and Australian institutions. The working group was also presented with a comparative financial analysis of the faculties within the UofA dated April 20, 2020. The April 22 ARWG meeting materials also included an official proposal from the management consulting firm, NOUS, to analyze a series of comparator institutions dated April 14, 2020. (The Provost's office confirmed that the university had engaged NOUS earlier in the 2019-20 academic year for the SET project, which was already underway; it then hired NOUS for this further smaller project of identifying comparisons for Academic Restructuring). We did not find documentation that ARWG or GFC were consulted regarding the initial selection of NOUS. The proposal recommended comparisons of Canadian universities (UBC, Univ.

of Toronto, UofC) as well as US, UK and Australian institutions. At the following meeting on May 14, 2022, the agenda included discussion of proposed organization models, working principles for the ARWG, and an initial paper prepared by NOUS. The NOUS paper provided an overview of the faculty structures of model institutions (including Canadian universities). At the end of the NOUS paper, next steps were detailed with a requirement that the working group agree on the design criteria for restructuring, as well as the selection of institutions for analysis as case studies. A total of eight case studies were presented to ARWG at their June 10, 2020 meeting. These cases did not include any Canadian institutions. All NOUS reports presented to ARWG were later made public to the University community in various configurations through presentations in town halls, GFC meetings, or the ARWG interim report (September 2020).

Our analysis of the NOUS reports found that all case studies presented by NOUS involved the reduction or reorganization of faculties. Notably, none of the cases included the addition of a further layer of academic administration on top of the faculty structure which characterized the “College Model” later approved by the Board of Governors. In addition, our committee did not find any evidence that NOUS advised the ARWG beyond the June 14, 2022 report. There was no indication that NOUS was consulted on the potential efficiencies or cost savings of the three initial restructuring models/scenarios presented to the GFC in September 2020.

The short timeline for undertaking such a massive restructuring had an important impact on the consultation and decision-making processes. The initial timeline presented to the ARWG in May 2020 envisioned a March 2021 approval date by the board, including a more extended period of consultation on the final model in November and December, with a final proposal to be presented to GFC in January 2021, and approval at GFC’s February meeting. The deadline for a GFC decision was not indicated in the Provost’s June report to GFC nor was a deadline listed in a July 15 ARWG document titled “Decision Steps.” By September 2020, however, the Board of Governors’ approval date had been moved to early December, thereby further compressing the process. Ordinarily, a transformation such as this would take five years and the consultation and preparation process would be much longer.

Our investigation revealed that this ever-tightening timeline and the lack of clarity about GFC’s role in this process and the date at which it would make its recommendation to the Board had a significant impact on both the consultation process and how it was experienced by the University of Alberta community. Much of the really significant thinking about principles and models was accomplished over the summer when the university community’s attention lulls and GFC does not meet. Well-attended town halls

were held on July 8 and 15, and consultation was carried out with the Dean's Council, the Students' Union, and the Graduate Students' Association over the summer.

Due to forceful arguments over the summer from various faculties regarding the importance of having distinct identities for accreditation purposes or due to significant community commitments (for example strong arguments in favour of preserving the integrity of the Faculty of Native Studies, the Campus St. Jean, and Augustana Campus), what had been a suggestion to consolidate faculties in June became a proposal to group faculties in various ways – including a new “college” model – by September. However, the speed of the process and the full scope of discussions by the ARWG were not presented to GFC until September, leading to a lack in preparedness for the interim report dated September 2020. This led to GFC members being taken aback when they were told at their first meeting in September by Board Chair Kate Chisholm that if GFC did not swiftly approve a plan, the Board would do so for them. The ARWG had travelled far over the summer, but the broader university community had not. Our conversations with members of the Provost's and President's offices revealed that this lag presented a serious communications challenge – to “catch up” the university community at large on both the evolution of thinking about academic restructuring over the summer, as well as the emotional coming-to-terms with the challenges before the U of A community.

The term “consultation” means different things to different people and those understandings vary according to cultural expectations and across sectors (business, education, government). We learned that there are also different types of consultation: one focuses largely on information sharing and building support; another aims to solicit feedback on a plan and to allow for adjustments; finally, a full participatory consultation involves stakeholders in the decision-making process and takes place at all phases of the process, beginning with the initial definition of the problem(s) to be addressed, then continuing through the development of policy, implementation, evaluation, and review. Our experts on organizational change (as well as best-practices documents from public organizations such as the Treasury Board of Canada) thus emphasized how crucial it is at the outset of a consultation to define its objectives and parameters (for instance: identifying problems, offering new ideas, or fine-tuning a proposal), to explain how the information gathered will be used and to clearly lay out the decision-making pathway so that expectations are clear on all sides.

The consultation of Fall 2020 was truly extensive and in terms of the participation of the university community, unprecedented in scope. Between June and November the following forms of consultation took place:

- **Town Halls** - 7 held between June and November 2020 (viewed over 41,000 times)¹
 - Use of **ThoughtExchange** to generate questions and feedback during town halls
- **Pulse surveys** - sent out to 700 people at random per month - from August 2020 to May 2021, reaching over 5600 employees with a response rate of 35%. Of 2000 responses, 1400 individual comments were collected.
- **Roundtables** – held with each faculty and various administrative groupings
- Numerous other **one on one consultations** including feedback sent via the online form and email address available on the UofA for Tomorrow website
- **Student Consultations** - ARWG met with the SU and GSA Executive at least four times each and the presidents of each student organization were part of the ARWG
- **Other Stakeholder Consultations** – ARWG regularly (largely through the Provost’s attendance and presentation at meetings) consulted with numerous stakeholders including Dean’s Council, APC, GFC, the Board of Governors, and the Senior Leader’s Retreat, in addition to the student unions mentioned above.
- **Key Governance Bodies** – GFC and its Executive Committee and Academic Programs Committee were regularly consulted and updated throughout the process.

The results of much of this consultation were publicly available on the University of Alberta for Tomorrow website. Traffic to this site was and continues to be high.

The context of the Covid-19 pandemic was an important factor in shaping the form and effectiveness of the consultation process. Those involved in its planning emphasized the challenges of finding new methods to consult the community in a completely online environment. They described trying various formats and techniques, each of which provided different types of information and attracted different levels of engagement. The Zoom format elicited far more participation than in any previous experience; for example, an average of 1600 individuals tuned in to each town hall. Yet at the same time, only a small number of those faces were visible to those doing the consultation and there was little ability to read the room – which for instance, would assist in gauging the level of support for a particular speaker’s question or comment.

Evidence from the ARWG’s files (including a consultation planning document dated May 2020) and interviews reveals that consultation was primarily envisioned as a series of

¹ A further series of SET town halls occurred starting in December 2020, after the model for Academic Restructuring had been approved.

meetings with stakeholders in three phases: “principles”, “preliminary options”, and “final proposal.” Some ARWG members also mentioned reaching out to their constituents and being encouraged to attend consultation events (e.g. town halls), but consultation *per se* was not one of their functions on the committee.

At each of its meetings, the ARWG was provided with the full range of the data collected, including all of the e-mails sent by community members and summaries developed by staff in the Provost’s office. Members were expected to review the material in advance and did so to the extent that their schedules permitted; however, with several ARWG members holding high-level leadership positions, the extent of this review was limited in some cases.

ARWG members offered several examples of how consultation affected the evolution of its proposals. Particularly important was early feedback in the summer about maintaining the integrity of the community faculties separate from the college groupings (and, more generally, about preserving faculty identity rather than wholesale amalgamations of faculties), and the placing of the idea of a College of Arts and Science on the table. The college model essentially emerged at the ARWG over the summer in response to resistance to the idea of faculty amalgamations.

GFC was explicitly informed of its decision-making role and deadline in September. Its members took that role very seriously, raising numerous questions and offering suggestions based on members’ experience “on the ground”, asking for further information including data on financial impact and SET, and seeking to contribute constructively to Academic Restructuring by making amendments to the ARWG’s final proposal, which were passed with a substantial majority.

Issues We Identified:

Despite the impressive extent of consultation activities in Fall 2020, our review of materials, conversations with both ARWG members and other colleagues involved in a range of capacities, and discussion with experts in consultation and change management revealed weaknesses in the conceptualization of both the role of consultation in decision-making and of the goals of this particular consultation. These deficiencies had an important impact on the resulting process – on both the university community’s experience of the consultation and on GFC’s perception of its ability to play a meaningful role in decision-making. These weaknesses can be summarized as follows:

- the purpose and scope of the consultation was poorly defined

- roles and authority in decision-making were unclear for both the ARWG and GFC (and the Board of Governors)
- the role of academic motivations in Academic Restructuring was unclear
- GFC was underutilized as a site for consultation and thus for decision-making

Purpose and scope: there was no clear definition of the objectives of the consultation and its parameters, and thus no clear communication of what sort of feedback was being sought, and about what aspects of the academic restructuring proposals were and were not negotiable. Major decisions about principles had in fact been made by the time the ARWG first met – most importantly, that academic restructuring would be the solution to the financial challenges the university faced and that academic restructuring would be discussed separately from the accompanying Service Excellence Transformation process. It was not clear initially to the members of the ARWG (let alone the broader university community), that alternatives to the “academic restructuring” approach to responding to the budget cuts would not be considered. Our interviews revealed that there was no preliminary discussion at the ARWG of the questions driving the consultations or of the way in which the evidence gleaned would be used.

The consultation plan found in ARWG’s materials was primarily a communications plan. This communication-focused approach played out in how most of the public consultations – town halls, roundtables, meetings of GFC and so on – were managed. Generally, they featured long presentations with relatively little time for discussion and, in some cases, responses to pre-selected questions with no opportunity for a conversation to develop. This format, together with a lack of clarity about what could and could not be changed, also contributed to a widespread sense that the consultations were largely performative.

Roles and authority in decision-making: key groups involved in the process of decision-making were unclear about their mandate and their authority. Several members of the ARWG noted that they were unsure initially – or even throughout the process – of their mandate. Some described a sense of having ‘carte blanche’ to think creatively about the academic organization of our institution in the future, whereas others felt that the budget cuts were the prime driver of the process and that it became increasingly clear that the Board and administration had strongly preferred options.

As the senior body for academic affairs in the University’s system of collegial governance, GFC was told that it was responsible for making the final recommendation to the Board of Governors, and ARWG members all remembered that an important criterion in discussing potential models was whether they would be acceptable to GFC. However, in the consultation plans and in practice, GFC was treated as just one of

many bodies to be consulted for feedback rather than as a deliberative body and a site for creative input into proposals. The Board of Governors emerges in the documents and people's recollections as impatient with the processes of consultation and collegial decision-making at GFC and as having a solution in mind that it would impose if GFC did not produce an acceptable recommendation in time. In the end, this is what happened: GFC believed that its deliberations had produced a compromise that would be acceptable to the university community, but GFC ended up being bypassed.

Role of academic motivations: there was a lack of clarity about what academic problems Academic Restructuring had set out to address or what academic benefits it would bring. The decision to completely separate the SET and AR processes made it difficult for members of the ARWG and of GFC to properly assess the impact of decisions about academic structures that seemed to be driven by cost-savings criteria and thus clearly had profound administrative implications. This had an impact on information-sharing: GFC felt that it was not given the tools to make the decision it was supposed to make. The net effect, one that several ARWG members noted regretfully in retrospect, was that the human impact of the proposed academic restructuring was not clear. Finally, the fact that principles and goals were unclear meant that metrics, too, were vague. No consultation was done or information provided about implementation plans.

GFC underutilized: GFC is the governing body responsible for academic affairs. In the face of such a major decision, GFC members were highly engaged. However, the structure of consultation and decision-making meant that GFC felt treated as a hoop to jump through rather than a partner in the process of Academic Restructuring. As we have already established, the timeline for decision-making was not clear to the GFC in June. Given that even with the originally planned timeline the plan was to propose models for discussion early in the fall term, GFC should have been involved in the consultation over the summer.

The events of Fall 2020 demonstrated the need to reinvigorate bicameral governance at the University of Alberta and to take seriously the role of GFC as the body responsible for the academic affairs of the university. The process of consultation and decision-making on academic restructuring revealed that GFC cannot be a decision-making body without also having a central deliberative role in the development of proposals.

Recommendations

Recommendations for planning of future consultations:

- 1) Clarify objectives from the outset: good consultation begins very early, in order to clarify the issues to be addressed and thereby distinguish symptoms from the problems themselves. Once the nature of the problem is identified, it becomes easier to establish the goals of further consultation: what type of feedback is needed to solve the problem? Metrics should be developed based on these objectives.
- 2) For all major consultations, a detailed plan should be worked out regarding what information is sought and how that information will be used in decision-making. This plan should be shared with stakeholders from the outset.
- 3) Establish a clear and publicly available roadmap for decision-making
- 4) Zoom should be retained as a tool, but should be used primarily to share information rather than gathering feedback. Zoom cannot replace in-person town halls and especially focus-group roundtables (which could have been held via Zoom but were not), which are critical to interactive and thus productive conversation.
- 5) Presentations at roundtables should be kept brief (no more than 15% of the allotted time) and questions should be spontaneous, not gathered in advance. Discussion and resistance should be embraced as opportunities for effective learning and to generate positive engagement.
- 6) GFC should be involved from the outset in consultations on major academic matters where GFC will take a decision (see below).
- 7) There needs to be a detailed consultation plan for the post-decision implementation period. This plan should be created early during the decision-making process to ensure objectives are and will be met and to permit learning and necessary adjustments as policy is implemented. There should be continuity of working groups/steering committees pre and post-decision to evaluate progress.

Recommendations regarding GFC and its role:

- 1) There should be a review of GFC's terms of reference and responsibilities to clarify its decision-making role and its authority.
- 2) Both GFC members and members of the Board of Governors should receive systematic education and regular reminders about the purpose, nature, and best practices of collegial governance.

- 3) We reiterate the importance of establishing a formal agreement between GFC and the Board of Governors on procedures for transmitting the will of GFC to the Board in the event that the chair of GFC disagrees with a recommendation of GFC.
- 4) GFC should elect a working group whenever major academic decisions are to be taken by GFC.
 - a) This working group should report directly and regularly to GFC and GFC Executive.
 - b) The group represents GFC within the consultation and decision-making process even if it occurs outside of regular GFC working periods.
 - c) The group is responsible for ensuring that any information essential for GFC to make an informed recommendation is provided.
 - d) Members elected to the working group must not already have a formal role in the process (for example, they must not be members of any steering committees or advisory groups).
- 5) GFC membership (or recent experience of GFC membership) should be a criterion in selecting members for advisory/steering groups such as the ARWG.
- 6) In the future, when major issues present themselves, GFC should expect to hold extra meetings or retreats. These meetings should be structured to allow for considerable interaction between members. For example, breakout groups followed by a “committee of the whole” would ensure that a wide range of voices are heard and the collective wisdom of GFC brought to bear on defining problems and shaping solutions. This will contribute to the elaboration of solutions that will enjoy buy-in from the university community’s highest decision-making body.
- 7) If GFC is truly the highest academic decision-making body at the university, it needs access to the full range of data to understand the impact of its decisions. A rigid categorization of academic and administrative matters does not represent reality and thus undermines effective decision-making. If GFC believes it needs information in order to make a decision within its jurisdiction, that information should be provided.

Approved document

General Faculties Council (GFC) *ad hoc* Committee for the Formal Review of the consultations and action processes for academic restructuring in the Fall of 2020

Terms of Reference

Mandate: As set out in the [Report of the Committee of the Whole](#) of February 8, 2021:

“That GFC Recommends there be a formal review of the consultations and action processes for academic restructuring in the Fall of 2020. The goal of the review would be to make recommendations to improve communication and decision-making processes of the GFC and the University going forward. The review should be conducted by a group elected by GFC and report to the GFC and the Board of Governors.”

The GFC *ad hoc* Committee for the Formal Review of Academic Restructuring will report on the consultations and action processes for academic restructuring in the Fall of 2020 and will make recommendations to improve communication and decision-making processes of the GFC going forward.

Membership:

- (a) The Committee will be made up of eight (8) members elected from/by GFC of whom at least two will be students (one graduate and one undergraduate). The Nominating Committee will receive applications to fill committee seats in accordance with the [Membership Replenishment Procedures](#) and will recommend 1 academic staff member (A1.1, A1.5, A1.6, A1.7) to serve as Chair;
- (b) Members shall act in good faith with the view to the best interests of the university as a whole. While members may be informed by matters raised by various constituencies, it is the duty of a member to ensure that all constituencies are fairly considered in the process of decision making

Terms of reference: To report to GFC on how to improve communication and decision-making processes of the GFC and the University going forward, the committee is given the following tasks:

- (a) To review the documentation from the Academic Restructuring process including all GFC and GFC Standing Committee minutes and consultation feedback from the University of Alberta for Tomorrow website.
- (b) Such other matters that arise during its investigations with respect to the enumerated tasks of the committee.

Timeline: The committee shall constitute itself as soon as possible, and report back to GFC with a preliminary report in November, 2021 and a final report by March, 2022.

Support: The committee shall have limited administrative support from University Governance.