



The following Motion was considered by the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment at its January 30, 2013 meeting:

Agenda Title: **GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on the Status of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRIs) Terms of Reference for Approval**

APPROVED MOTION: THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the proposed Terms of Reference for the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) on the Status of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRIs) Subcommittee, as set forth in Attachment 1, to take effect upon final approval.

OUTLINE OF ISSUE

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Motion: THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the proposed Terms of Reference for the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) on the Status of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRIs) Subcommittee, as set forth in Attachment 1, to take effect upon final approval.

Item

Action Requested	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion/Advice <input type="checkbox"/> Information
Proposed by	Bill Connor, Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment
Presenter	Sheree Kwong See, Interim Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL), and Chair, GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on the Status of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRIs)
Subject	Proposed Terms of Reference of the GFC CLE Subcommittee on the Status of USRIs

Details

Responsibility	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
The Purpose of the Proposal is (please be specific)	At the October 3, 2012 meeting of GFC CLE, the Committee's Chair proposed that a 2009 report of a previous GFC CLE subcommittee examining the evaluation of teaching at the University of Alberta and, in particular, use of USRIs be revisited and called for a group of volunteers to form a subcommittee to lead discussion and make recommendations based on the 2009 document. The (attached) Terms of Reference for this subcommittee are now being forwarded to GFC CLE for review and formal approval.
The Impact of the Proposal is	See 'Purpose'.
Replaces/Revises (eg, policies, resolutions)	N/A
Timeline/Implementation Date	N/A
Estimated Cost	N/A
Sources of Funding	N/A
Notes	N/A

Alignment/Compliance

Alignment with Guiding Documents	<i>Dare to Discover Values</i> : to provide an intellectually superior educational environment; integrity, fairness, and principles of ethical conduct built on the foundation of academic freedom, open inquiry, and the pursuit of truth.
Compliance with Legislation, Policy and/or Procedure Relevant to the Proposal (please quote legislation and include identifying section numbers)	<p>1. The <i>Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA)</i>, Section 26(1), gives General Faculties Council (GFC) responsibility, subject to the authority of the Board of Governors, over "academic affairs." GFC has thus established a Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE).</p> <p>2. GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Terms of Reference: Section 3 (<i>Mandate of the Committee</i>): "The Committee on the Learning Environment is a standing committee of the General Faculties Council that promotes an optimal learning environment in</p>

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	<p>alignment with guiding documents of the University of Alberta.</p> <p>The Committee on the Learning Environment is responsible for making recommendations concerning policy matters and action matters with respect to the following:</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>b) To review and, as necessary, recommend to the GFC Academic Planning Committee and GFC Executive Committee as relates to the development and implementation of policies on teaching, learning, teaching evaluation, and recognition for teaching that promote the University Academic Plan.</p> <p>c) To develop policies that promote ongoing assessment of teaching and learning through all Faculties and units.</p> <p>d) To nurture the development of innovative and creative teaching practices.</p> <p>e) To encourage the sharing and discussion of evidence about effective teaching and learning.</p> <p>f) To promote critical reflection on the impact of broad societal changes in teaching and learning.</p> <p>g) To promote projects with relevant internal and external bodies that offer unique teaching and learning opportunities that would benefit the university community.</p> <p>h) To consider any matter deemed by the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment to be within the purview of its general responsibility.</p> <p>Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the terms of reference above, the General Faculties Council has delegated to the Committee on the Learning Environment the following powers and authority:</p> <p>To recommend to the GFC Academic Planning Committee and to the GFC Executive Committee broad policy directions for excellence in teaching and learning.”</p> <p>3. Standing and Other Committees of General Faculties Council (GFC) General Terms of Reference: “[...]”</p> <p>9. Delegations and Referrals</p> <p>Each standing committee has the power to refer or delegate specific matters under its authority to another GFC Standing Committee, to a Sub-Committee, or to an academic or administrative unit unless GFC expressly restricts referral or delegation or the other GFC Standing Committee, Sub-Committee or unit refuses to accept the referral or delegation.</p> <p>[...]”</p>
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Routing (Include meeting dates)

Consultative Route (parties who have seen the proposal and in what capacity)	GFC Committee on the Learning Environment Subcommittee on the Status of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction
Approval Route (Governance) (including meeting dates)	GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (January 30, 2013) – for final approval



Final Approver	GFC Committee on the Learning Environment
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Attachments (each to be numbered 1 - <>):

1. Attachment 1 (pages 1 – 2) – GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on the Status of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRIs) Terms of Reference for Approval

Prepared by: Sheree Kwong See, Interim Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning, and Chair, GFC CLE Subcommittee on the Status of URSIs

GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)
Subcommittee on the Status of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRIs)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Background

“[The] interdependence and integration of research and teaching is what distinguishes a university from other educational institutions. Although the balance between these activities may vary, all members of the university, whether scholars or students, are learners who extend the range of their knowledge through exploration and discovery, and they are teachers who communicate that knowledge to others.” (GFC 111.1)

Because both research and teaching are central to our mission as a university, discussion and support of teaching and learning are of paramount importance. The GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) is the committee responsible for the promotion of excellence in teaching and of an optimal learning environment, as well as with the provision of appropriate information resources to the university community as a whole. It is within the scope of CLE to develop policy to promote ongoing assessment of teaching and learning at the University.

At the October 3, 2012 meeting of the CLE the Chair proposed that a 2009 report of a previous CLE subcommittee examining the evaluation of teaching at the University of Alberta, and in particular use of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRIs), be revisited and called for a group of volunteers to form a subcommittee to lead discussion and make recommendations based on the 2009 document.

2. Committee Mandate

The mandate of the subcommittee is to review the recommendations of the 2009 document, fully consider the recommendations on behalf of CLE, discuss which of and how the recommendations might be actualized, and in so doing, identify potential changes to GFC policy for consideration by CLE.

3. Committee Composition

Volunteers from CLE to sit on this subcommittee:

Nathan Andrews, Vice-President (Academic), Graduate Students' Association
Dustin Chelen, Vice-President (Academic), Students' Union
Bill Connor, CLE Chair, Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction)
Larry Kostiuik, Representative for Department Chairs, External to CLE

Sheree Kwong See, Interim Director Centre for Teaching and Learning,
Subcommittee Chair
Rachel Milner, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Brock Richardson, Staff, Member of CLE

4. Committee Meetings and Timeline

- The subcommittee will meet between October 2012 and June 2013.
- A preliminary report for discussion will be presented at the May 1, 2013 CLE meeting.
- A final report will be submitted at the June 5, 2013 CLE meeting.

5. Committee Support

The Office of the Provost will provide administrative support.

Reference and Resource Documents:

- GFC Policy Manual section on Teaching and Learning
<http://www.gfcpolicymanual.ualberta.ca/en/111TeachingandLearningandTeach.aspx>
- Evaluation of Teaching at the UofA Report of the Sub-committee of the CLE 2009 available for download
<http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/en/GeneralFacultiesCouncil/CommitteeontheLearningEnvironm/CLESubcommitteeReports.aspx>

Approvals Route:

CLE January 30, 2013