

General Faculties Council
Executive Committee
Approved Open Session Minutes

Monday, January 15, 2024
SAB 2-31
2:00 PM - 3:20 PM

ATTENDEES:

Bill Flanagan (Chair)
Pedro Almeida
Ryan Dunch
Kyle Foster
Danielle Gardiner-Milln
Julianne Gibbs-Davis
Rija Kamran

Jelena Holovati
Sujata Persad
Spencer Proctor
Norma Rodenburg
Robert Wood
Verna Yiu

non-voting:

John Lemieux
Kate Peters

REGRETS:

Dan Romanyk
Aiman Saif
Staff:
Faiza Billo

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

Discussion: The Chair began by acknowledging the territory and welcoming members.

The motion to approve the agenda was moved and seconded.

THAT GFC Executive Committee approve the agenda.

CARRIED

2. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

Presenter(s): Bill Flanagan, Chair

Discussion: The Chair noted the appointment of Verna Yiu as the Provost and Vice-President (Academic); the closure of the Humanities Centre; and the commencement of collective bargaining with both the Association of Academic Staff of the University of Alberta (AASUA) and the Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA).

CONSENT AGENDA

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

The motion to approve the items in the consent agenda was moved and seconded.

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of October 30, 2023

THAT GFC Executive Committee approve the open session minutes of October 30, 2023

CARRIED

4. Changes to the School of Public Health Faculty Council Composition and Quorum

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from the General Faculties Council, proposed changes to the composition of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Arts, as set forth in Attachment 1, to take effect upon final approval.

CARRIED

5. Changes to the Faculte Saint-Jean Faculty Council Composition and Quorum

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from the General Faculties Council, proposed changes to the composition of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Arts, as set forth in Attachment 1, to take effect upon final approval.

CARRIED

ACTION ITEMS

6. Proposed Consolidated Exam - Physics 124

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Erik Rosolowsky, Professor, Faculty of Science

Discussion: The Chair reminded members of their delegated authority to approve consolidated exams. E Rosolowsky presented the rationale for the proposal noting student concerns about disparities in exam practices.

The Acting Vice-Provost and University Registrar noted the process to accommodate this additional consolidated exam and reassured members that there was room to accommodate the additional exam in the schedule. Members asked about diversity in teaching practices.

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the addition of PHYS 124, Particles and Waves, to the list of courses with Consolidated Final Examinations, as submitted by the Faculty of Science, to take effect in 2024-2025

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

7. Annual Report of Appeals and Compliance Officer

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Laura Riley, Coordinator, Appeals and Compliance

Discussion: The Chair referred members to the Exec Terms of Reference noting their authority to receive annual reports on appeals and compliance. L Riley presented an overview of the report.

Members asked if the report would be forwarded to GFC and whether there was any tracking of demographic data that may be useful to the committee to understand trends.

8. Annual Report of Student Conduct Responses

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Ravina Sanghera, Vice Provost and Dean of Students; Tim Tang, Associate Vice-President, Student Experience; Chris Hackett, Director, Student Services - Student Conduct & Accountability

Discussion: C Hackett noted the scope of change ongoing in the area of student services and presented the trends in the report. He noted in particular the important work to put in place a new Academic Integrity Policy Suite and the impact of the new Student Conduct Policy Suite. He asked members to keep in mind that the numbers will likely fluctuate. R Sanghera and T Tang expressed hope that the forthcoming policy suite would improve the landscape of student conduct.

Members asked about discrepancies and disparities between faculty-level processes and decision-making and how the University might mitigate this diversity. The members noted the importance of training and cohesion across the University and asked how capacity will be built to achieve more standardization across the University.

9. UAcademy Lab Project (no documents)

Presenter(s): Jelena Holovati, Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, Brad Pinno, Associate Professor, Faculty Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences, Sandra Rein, Professor, Augustana, Ravina Sanghera, Vice-Provost and Dean of Students, Eleni Stroulia, Professor, Faculty of Science

Discussion: The UAcademy team presented the project scope and noted their methodology for addressing the issues defined, including interviews, observations, an environmental scan, and a literature review on Community of Practices in organisations. They presented their recommendations to improve member orientation and engagement including practices or simulations, online resources, improving the readability of governance materials, mentorship, and improving the visibility of service. They concluded by expressing a hope that these ideas could amplify member engagement and noted that the University of Alberta Students Union is already implementing some of these practices.

University Secretary J Lemieux expressed appreciation for the recommendations and noted some of the work that University Governance is already doing, including:

- terms of reference drafting that includes improved clarity for members;
- consideration of how to streamline materials;
- redesign of committee processes; and
- an external scan of other academic senates.

The Chair expressed support for the recommendations, especially those which relate to member education. He noted the value of a mentoring relationship to make GFC less intimidating. The Provost and Vice-President (Academic) expressed a hope that implementing these recommendations could elevate the GFC and make service attractive.

Members asked questions and made comments, including:

- whether service to GFC was recognized within Faculty Evaluation Committee (FEC) processes;
- how to support members forging connections and getting to know each other, especially in the post-COVID context;
- whether there would be value in developing guidelines for FEC to assess service in their process;

- how challenging it is to incentivize service and the need to ensure that engagement is also driven by a feeling of contributing to a common purpose;
- the importance of considering the unique needs of students, especially in mentorship; and
- support for the idea of rewarding engagement through honourifics, awards, opportunities for fellowship and other incentives.

In conclusion, the Chair thanked members for their work.

PREPARATION OF THE GFC AGENDA

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

10. A. Program Revitalization for the Bachelor of Commerce Program, Faculty of Business (Consent - action)
B. ProDean for Graduate Examinations (Consent - action)
C. Student Academic Integrity Policy Suite (Discussion)
D. Foundation Program (Discussion)
E. People Strategy (no documents) (Discussion)
F. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (No documents) (Discussion)
G. Emergency and Risk Management Framework and Risk Management Policy (Information Reports)
H. Metrics Associated with Academic Restructuring (Information Reports)

ACTION ITEMS

11. Draft Agenda for the Next Meeting of General Faculties Council

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

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

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the GFC Executive Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the Agenda for the January 29, 2024 meeting of General Faculties Council, as set forth in Attachment 1.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

12. Question Period

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

Discussion: Members asked questions regarding:

- the Foundation Program and how it will be incorporated into the new budget model;
- the University's response to recent extreme weather related to in-class participation and whether the instructors are required to accommodate students; including that each faculty takes a different approach and that some faculties encourage instructors to find ways to help students adapt in both lecture and lab-based instruction; and
- the recent Emergency Alert concerning Alberta's power grid usage; how the University would respond if that were to happen mid-week; and whether the University had contingency plans in place.

Members also expressed appreciation for the work of the Acting Vice-Provost and University Registrar for her recent work.

INFORMATION REPORTS

13. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings
- December 4 Meeting of EXEC and Request for Feedback

CLOSING SESSION

14. Adjournment
- Next Meeting of Exec: February 12, 2024
- Next Meeting of GFC: January 29, 2024