

GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL
AGENDA

Meeting #612, January 13, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

By Zoom platform

Item	Description	Presenter	Materials	Estimated Time
1.	Conflict of Interest Declaration	McCauley	Verbal	1:30
2.	Inclusive Practice Moment	Barker ¹	Verbal	
3.	Remarks of the Chair	McCauley	Verbal	
4.	Remarks of the Vice-Chair	Balser	Verbal	
5.	Question Period	McCauley	Verbal	
6.	Safety Moment	Van Hee ²	PowerPoint	
	Action Items			
7.	Approval of the December 9, 2021 Meeting Minutes	McCauley	Document	
	Discussion Items			
8.	Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) Working Group Recommendations Report	Reid ³ /Estefan ⁴	Document	2:00
	Information Items			
9.	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the Research Portfolio - Dimensions Update	Smith ⁵ /Thompson ⁶	PowerPoint	2:45
10.	Standing Reports: a) Report on the December 13, 2021 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee Meeting b) Report on the December 14, 2021 Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting c) Report on the December 16, 2021 Research and Scholarship Committee Meeting d) Report on the December 10, 2021 Board of Governors Meeting	In Package Only	Documents	3:05
11.	Other Business	McCauley		
12.	Adjournment Next meeting: February 10, 2022	McCauley	Verbal	3:05

Regrets and Questions: Elizabeth Sjogren, Governance Coordinator
Email: esjogren@ucalgary.ca

Lise Houle, Interim University Secretary
Email: lhoule@ucalgary.ca

GFC Information: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/general-faculties-council>

Presenters

1. Susan Barker, Vice-Provost (Student Experience)
2. Mike Van Hee, Interim Vice-President (Finance and Services) - Services
3. Leslie Reid, Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) and Co-Chair, USRI Working Group
4. Andrew Estefan, Co-Chair, USRI Working Group
5. Malinda Smith, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President Research (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)
6. Robert Thompson, Associate Vice-President (Research)

Additional Presenters for Item 8

Jacqueline Lambert, Office of Institutional Analysis and member of the USRI Working Group
Barb Brown, Werklund School of Education and member of the USRI Working Group
Natasha Kenny, Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning and member of the USRI Working Group
Jason Wiens, Faculty of Arts and member of the USRI Working Group
Wendy Benoit, Faculty of Science and member of the USRI Working Group
Robin Arsenault, Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning member of the USRI Working Group
Renzo Pereyra, Students' Union and member of the USRI Working Group
Alex Paquette, Graduate Students' Association and member of the USRI Working Group



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EHS Dashboard Project

Update to General Faculties Council

Mike Van Hee
Interim Vice-President (Finance and Services) - Services

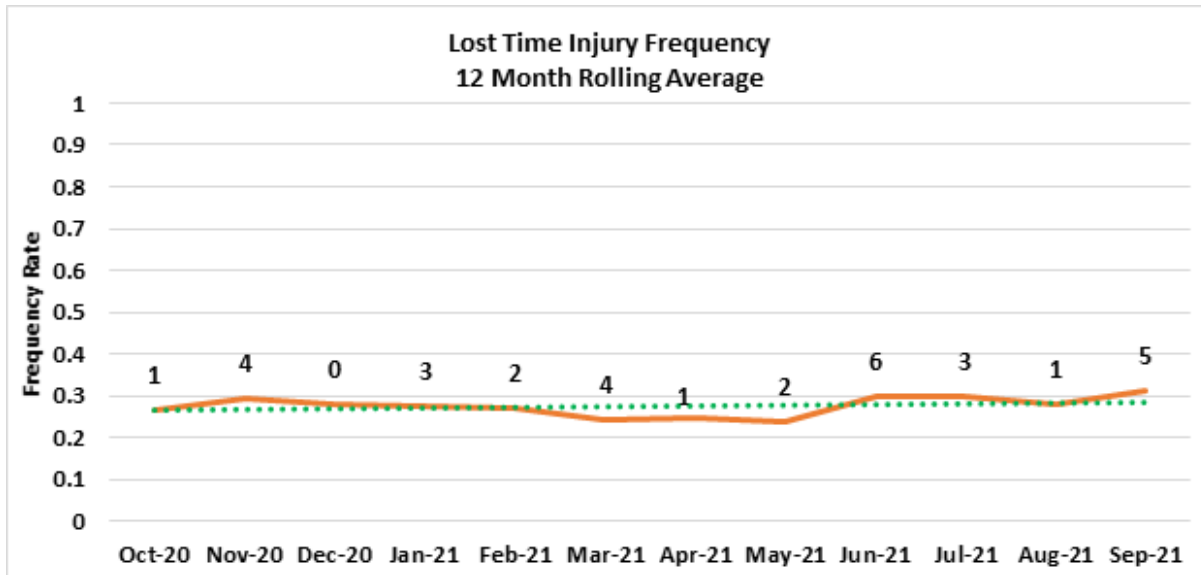
January 13, 2022

Overview

- EHS dashboard development project was completed in mid-2020 and rollout occurred beginning in 2021
- Examines for each Faculty/Unit:
 - Total recordable injury frequency rate (lagging indicator)
 - Lost time incident frequency rate (lagging indicator)
 - Seven different leading indicators
- Over the past year, meetings have been held with faculties and units where the work carries a higher inherent safety risk :
 - To introduce the dashboard
 - To compare performance in their areas of responsibility against overall university performance and against leading indicator benchmarks and standards
- Outcome of this work:
 - Identify areas for improvement for the faculty or department or the university as a whole

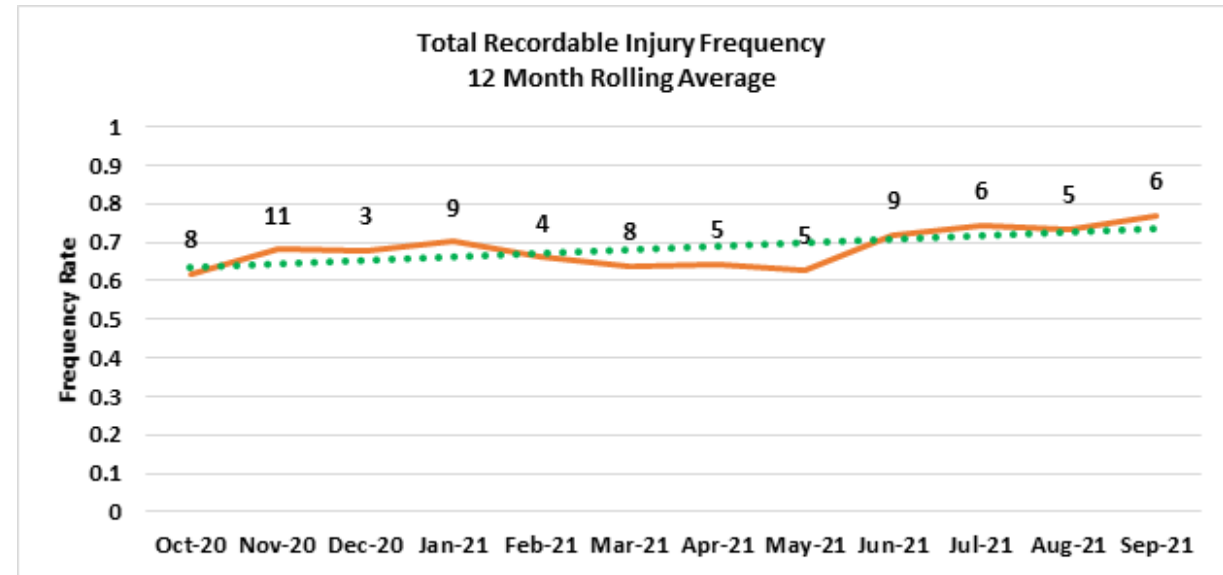


Lagging safety indicators – LTIF and TRIF



Lost Time Injury Frequency

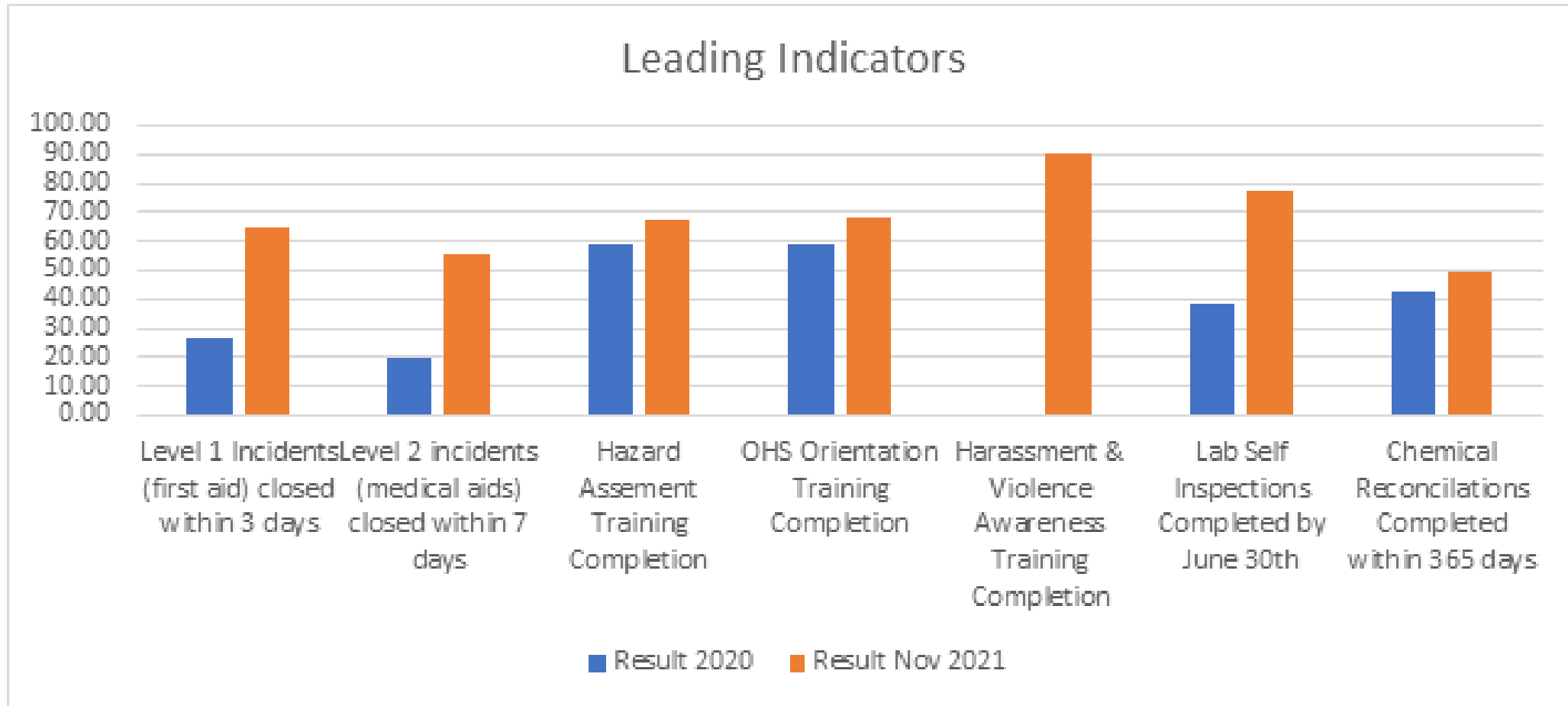
The Lost Time Injury Frequency (LTIF) metric only includes lost time injuries and represents the number of lost time injuries 100 workers would experience in a one-year period.



Total Recordable Injury Frequency

The Total Recordable Injury Frequency (TRIF) metric includes lost time, medical aid, and modified work injuries and represents the percentage of the workforce that would experience these types of injuries in a one-year period.

Leading Indicators



Dashboard Review Meetings Held to Date

Meetings held to date with:

- Schulich School of Engineering
- Faculty of Science
- Cumming School of Medicine
- Faculty of Kinesiology
- Faculty of Veterinary Medicine
- Facilities Management
- Faculty of Arts

Next Steps

- Meet with remaining faculties and departments
- EHS can provide background data for incomplete training, lab inspections, chemical reconciliations for targeted follow-up from faculty/department leaders
- Contact ucsafety@ucalgary.ca for additional information

The draft Minutes are intentionally removed from this package.

Please see the approved Minutes [uploaded separately on this website](#).



GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL ACTION BRIEFING NOTE

For Approval For Recommendation For Discussion

SUBJECT: **Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) Working Group Recommendations Report**

PROPONENT(S)

Leslie Reid & Andrew Estefan (co-chairs, USRI Working Group) & USRI Working Group: Robin Arseneault, Barb Brown, Wendy Benoit, Natasha Kenny, Jason Wiens, Jacqueline Lambert, Renzo Pereyra, Alex Paquette.

REQUESTED ACTION

For the General Faculties Council (GFC) to provide feedback on the draft recommendation report of the USRI Working Group.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS/POINTS

In January 2019, a working group formed to conduct a review of the University's USRI system, including the current questions, the platform used to administer the USRI and the processes around communication, collection, and distribution of the USRI. Following a review bring forward a summary report with recommendations for change. The USRI working group reports to the General Faculties Council (GFC) Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC). The terms of reference can be found at this [link](#).

After a comprehensive review of the research, trends in student feedback in higher education, and consultations across campus, we recommend that significant change is needed to the current USRI and Faculty Form system of collecting student feedback. This change is necessary to align our student feedback system with the research on teaching, learning and student experience in higher education.

The working group has organized these recommendations into thematic areas within our report and have drafted actionable items for each. These actions will create a robust system for student feedback on their learning experiences, build credibility and trust around course feedback, and facilitate students and academic staff coming together and working together to enhance quality teaching and learning in a good way.

The report was circulated and made available in October 2021 to the Teaching and Learning Committee of GFC. Feedback was collected at the GFC Teaching and Learning Committee meetings on Oct 8 and Oct 19, 2021. This feedback was incorporated into the report and further shared at Graduate Representative Council (GRC) on November 30, 2021, and Student Legislative Council (SLC) on November 30, 2021. The draft report was shared with the campus community this past November and is available on the VPTL website [here](#). Feedback can be provided via a [feedback form](#) which remains open until Jan 20, 2022.

A summary of the feedback heard over the last few months includes:

- Support for recommendations to focus questions on learning experiences and provide customization in the questions so questions on learning experiences can better match the learning contexts
- Support for ensuring equity, diversity and inclusion are built into all aspects of a new system, including the questions, administration and reporting

- Support for developing feedback processes that use Indigenous ways of knowing and being and align with the commitment to parallel processes in *ii' taa'poh'to'p*
- Building a system that can incorporate feedback to Graduate Teaching Assistants
- Increasing awareness and education on what happens with student feedback; where does it go; who reads it?
- Build additional opportunities for students to provide feedback throughout the term on their learning experiences

BACKGROUND

In 1998, the University of Calgary launched the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI), a 11-item Likert-scale questionnaire developed to serve as a mechanism to gather student feedback at the end of a course, and to serve as one facet in understanding teaching quality at the University of Calgary. The USRI is typically administered at the same time as faculty/department/unit course feedback surveys, herein referred to as “Faculty Forms.” The Faculty Forms are developed and governed by the academic units and are intended to complement the information collected through the USRI questionnaire. Most Faculty Forms consist of open-ended questions and serve to collect qualitative feedback from students. After its launch in 1998, the USRI was reviewed in 2003 by a USRI Review Committee. Both reports can be found on the [USRI Working Group](#) website. This is the last time the USRI system was formally reviewed.

Over the last 20 years there have been significant advancements in several areas that drive the need for a comprehensive review of the USRI system. First, advances in the understanding of how people learn and the research in teaching, learning and student engagement in higher education inform what teaching practices enhance and optimize student learning (Ambrose, Lovett, Bridges, DiPietro & Norman, 2010; Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 1999; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018; Schwartz & Gurung, 2012; Smith & Baik, 2019). Modern course evaluation questionnaires should reflect questions linked to scholarly teaching and learning practices, including placing value on multiple ways of knowing (Louie et al., 2017). Second, over the past two decades, there have been advances in collecting systematic feedback on student outcomes as well as student feedback on their learning and campus experiences. Universities have recognized the need to have multiple mechanisms to collect student feedback on their experience, including end-of-course feedback forms, but they also acknowledge that opportunities for students to provide feedback on their experiences need to go far beyond course feedback.

Finally, there have been advances in the technology available to set up student feedback systems in higher education. Available technology systems such as [Explorance](#), [Anthology-Campus Labs](#), and [Creatrix Campus](#) include options such as validated course feedback questionnaires, question banks that can be customized to align with different learning experiences (i.e., online or face-to-face, clinical and lab settings, experiential learning courses), midcourse feedback questionnaires and automated reminders for students and staff, and the capability for online integration with an institution’s learning management systems. These technologies are vastly advanced from the University of Calgary’s current system, which is the Scantron-based Class Climate. In addition to increased functionality and ease of use, new technology platforms support advanced survey data practices and data collection, management, and reporting.

ROUTING AND PERSONS CONSULTED

<u>Progress</u>	<u>Body</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Discussion</u>	<u>Information</u>
	Provost Team Meeting	Sept 2021			X	
	Teaching and Learning Committee	Oct 8, 2021			X	
	Teaching and Learning Committee	Oct 19, 2021			X	
	Students’ Legislative Council	Nov 30, 2021			X	

	Graduate Students' Association Council	Nov 30, 2021	X
X	General Faculties Council	Jan 13, 2022	X

NEXT STEPS

Use feedback from GFC to make any further modifications to the USRI report and prepare for the report being brought back to GFC for approval.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

1. USRI Working Group Recommendation Report
2. Presentation Slide Deck



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY | General Faculties Council Teaching and Learning Committee Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) Working Group

Recommendation Report

October 4, 2021

Prepared by Members of the USRI Working Group

Dr. Andrew Estefan & Dr. Leslie Reid (co-chairs)
Dr. Wendy Benoit (Science)
Dr. Barb Brown (Werklund)
Dr. Dawn Johnston (Arts)
Dr. Natasha Kenny (Taylor Institute)
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Alex Paquette (GSA VPA)
Jackie Lambert (OIA)
Robin Arseneault (Teaching and Learning)
Rahim Pira (Research Associate)

We would like to acknowledge the contributions of past members of the USRI working group: Dr. Sarah Eaton (Werklund), Luc Boyer (OIA), Brianna Strum (Research Associate), Kevin Dang (SU VPA), Elena Favaro (GSA VPA), Mohamed Abdelsamie (GSA VPA), Dana Naser (SU Rep), Dr. Paul Rogers (TUCFA), Darren Balchin (IT), and Travis Klemp (Teaching and Learning).

We would also like to acknowledge academic staff in the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning who facilitated consultation sessions: Dr. Carol Berenson, Dr. Patti Dyjur, Dr. Lisa Fedoruk, Dr. Kim Grant, Dr. Cheryl Jeffs and Dr. Natasha Kenny.

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Some documents referred to in this report can be found on the [USRI Working Group website](#): documents include the GFC USRI Reports (1998 and 2003); GFC TLC Working Group Terms of Reference; USRI Working Group Literature Review Summary; Current USRI instrument and sample report.

Background

The practice of obtaining student feedback on their course learning experiences is a widespread and important component to helping academic staff critically reflect upon, assess, and improve their teaching practices (Gravestock & Gregor-Greenleaf, 2008; Linse, 2017; Richardson, 2005). When used and interpreted in context, student feedback is also an important component in the formal evaluation of teaching in higher education (Linse, 2017). Many institutions across Canada have recently or are currently engaging in systematic institutional reviews of student evaluations of teaching to ensure that they reflect the components of teaching, course design and student experience that are linked to the research on student learning and engagement. Generally, this work has confirmed that: a) gathering, interpreting and using student feedback is complex and challenging; b) robust technology and administrative systems and processes need to be in place across multiple organizational levels to support student feedback and evaluation processes; and c) documenting, assessing and improving teaching and learning practices must be based on evidence from multiple sources (i.e., instructor self-reflection, peer review and observation, student feedback, and scholarship on teaching and learning) over multiple periods of time.

In 1998, the University of Calgary launched the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI), a 11-item Likert-scale questionnaire developed to serve as a mechanism to gather student feedback at the end of a course, and to serve as one facet in understanding teaching quality at the University of Calgary. The USRI is typically administered at the same time as faculty/department/unit course feedback surveys, herein referred to as “Faculty Forms.” The Faculty Forms are developed and governed by the academic units and are intended to complement the information collected through the USRI questionnaire. Most Faculty Forms consist of open-ended questions and serve as a way to collect qualitative feedback from students. After its launch in 1998, the USRI was reviewed in 2003 by a USRI Review Committee. Both reports can be found on the [USRI Working Group](#) website. This is the last time the USRI system was formally reviewed.

Over the last 20 years there have been significant advancements in a number of areas that drive the need for a comprehensive review of the USRI system. First, advances in the understanding of how people learn and the research in teaching, learning and student engagement in higher education inform what teaching practices enhance and optimize student learning (Ambrose, Lovett, Bridges, DiPietro & Norman, 2010; Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 1999; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018; Schwartz & Gurung, 2012; Smith & Baik, 2019). Modern course evaluation questionnaires should reflect questions linked to scholarly teaching and learning practices, including placing value on multiple ways of knowing (Louie et al., 2017). Second, over the past two decades, there have been advances in collecting systematic feedback on student outcomes as well as student feedback on their learning and campus experiences. Universities have recognized the need to have multiple mechanisms to collect student feedback on their experience, including end-of-course feedback forms, but they also acknowledge that opportunities for students to provide feedback on their experiences need to go far beyond course feedback.

Finally, there have been advances in the technology available to set up student feedback systems in higher education. Available technology systems such as [Explorance](#), Anthology-[Campus Labs](#), and [Creatrix Campus](#) include options such as validated course feedback questionnaires, question banks that can be customized to align with different learning experiences (i.e., online or face-to-face, clinical and lab settings, experiential learning courses), midcourse feedback questionnaires and automated reminders for students and staff, and the capability for online integration with an institution's learning management systems. These technologies are vastly advanced from the University of Calgary's current system, which is the Scantron-based Class Climate. In addition to increased functionality and ease of use, new technology platforms support advanced survey data practices and data collection, management and reporting.

USRI Working Group

In January 2019, a working group formed to conduct a review of the University's USRI system, including the current questions, the platform used to administer the USRI and the processes around communication, collection and distribution of the USRI, and bring forward a summary report with recommendations for change. The USRI working group reports to the General Faculties Council (GFC) Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC). The terms of reference can be found at this [link](#). The activities and timelines of the USRI working group since its inception are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. USRI Working Group Activities and Timeline

Nov 2018	Formation of a USRI working group was approved at GFC
Jan 2019	First meeting of the USRI working group
Apr 2019	Conducted literature summary of student ratings of instruction
Jun 2019	Developed comprehensive plan for campus consultations
Dec 2019	Confirmed faculty/unit leads and held pilot consultations with them
Jan 2020	In-person consultations began; 12 sessions completed with the Faculty of Law, Faculty of Arts, Haskayne School of Business, Nursing, Faculty of Science, Schulich School of Engineering, Student's Union, Graduate Students Association
Mar 2020	Campus closure due to COVID-19
Jun 2020	Consultations resume in an online environment; 11 sessions completed with School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape, Cumming School of Medicine, Faculty of Kinesiology, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Social Work, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary in Qatar, Teaching and Learning Subcommittee of the Campus Mental Health Strategy's Implementation Advisory Committee, Indigenous Scholars and the Office of Indigenous Engagement, DEI Network Committee and the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
Sep 2020	Data analysis begins, and consultation report completed
Oct 2020	Working group workshop; thematizing data
Oct 2021	Complete draft USRI recommendation report

The first action of the working group was to complete a literature review to guide their work. This report was used to inform a comprehensive consultation plan to be taken to the academic community for the widespread review of the current USRI. A copy of the report can be found [here](#).

Consultations

Consultations began in January 2020 with in-person meetings. In March 2020 this process was revised to adapt to COVID-19 protocols and continued in an online environment between April and June 2020. Each academic unit was consulted, including the University of Calgary Qatar campus. Additional groups were also consulted, such as the Student's Union, the Graduate Student Association (GSA) and three groups that support UCalgary strategies: The Campus Mental Health Strategy Teaching and Learning Committee, the Diversity Network, and the Office of Indigenous Engagement's Indigenous Scholars network. Overall, there were 23 facilitated discussions – 12 face-to-face sessions and 11 online – with a total of 298 participants.

All consultations were booked in coordination with designated faculty or unit representatives, and at a time and day suitable for their needs. Representatives were responsible for sending out a pre-drafted email inviting academic staff from their area to attend or for students through the GSA and Student's Union. Consultations were facilitated by academic staff from the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning and were usually 90 minutes long. Sessions included a slide presentation beginning with a research/environmental scan overview and led into several activities to gather feedback on the presented principles and to identify challenges and improvements to the USRI. Questions broadly explored included:

- What are the key challenges and issues associated with the current USRI?
- What is the most meaningful feedback students could provide on their learning experiences through an instrument like the USRI?
- What changes would you most like to see in the USRI process?

Consultations were conducted individually or in small groups. During the group sessions, participants were invited to record their comments on worksheets, and during online sessions, via the Zoom chat function and Google docs. At the end of each session, participants were offered an opportunity to sign up to receive an emailed link to provide further, anonymous input on the USRI. Feedback was captured through the handwritten worksheets; notes taken by a graduate research assistant and project coordinator; and themes recorded by the facilitators to capture participant comments throughout the session (e.g., on flip chart paper, white boards and via the zoom chat and/or google docs). This feedback was further aggregated for anonymity and thematic analysis, the results of which have informed the recommendations presented in this report.

Guiding Principles

Based upon the literature review and an environmental scan of course feedback processes across Canada, the working group developed seven guiding principles for an effective system for student feedback on their academic course learning experiences to frame the consultations. The

principles are: *learning-focused; minimize bias; valid and reliable; modular; flexible and customizable; streamlined and secure; responsible use* and reporting*. These principles were shared throughout the consultation process for feedback and to help frame and guide discussions [Appendix I].

*It is not the purview of the USRI working group to consult on use or make recommendations on the use of USRI in academic processes.

Interim Changes to the USRI and Reports

In the fall of 2019, the USRI working group recognized there were some [immediate changes](#) that could be made to the USRI questions and related reports that would: 1) help address concerns being raised in consultations and 2) better align the current USRI with the research on course evaluations. The working group recommended to General Faculties Council three immediate changes to the current USRI. These changes were: removal of the question that asks students to rate the quality of overall instruction; removal of the comparators on the USRI reports; and replacement of means with modes on the USRI reports. All three changes were informed by the research on the use of student ratings of instruction and are in line with changes to student rating forms in higher education across Canada.

The changes were brought forward as recommendations to the GFC Teaching and Learning Committee and the GFC Executive Committee, with final approval at General Faculties Council on December 12, 2019. All three changes were implemented with the USRI and subsequent reports starting in September 2020.

Recommendations

After a comprehensive review of the research, trends in student feedback in higher education, and consultations across campus, we recommend that significant change is needed to the current USRI and Faculty Form system of collecting student feedback. This change is necessary to align our student feedback system with the research on teaching, learning and student experience in higher education.

Numerous recommendations emerged from the data collected during campus consultations [see Appendix II for a summary report of the consultation process]. The working group has organized these recommendations into thematic areas and have drafted actionable items for each. These actions will create a robust system for student feedback on their learning experiences, build credibility and trust around course feedback, and facilitate students and academic staff coming together and working together to enhance quality teaching and learning in a good way.

In the themed area descriptions below, feedback collected during the consultations are used to illustrate and substantiate the recommendations put forward.

It is important to note that the USRI working group set out to collect feedback on the USRI and not on the Faculty Forms. However, discussion and feedback focused on the Faculty Forms came up at every consultation session with the most frequent observation being that most academic staff and students think the Faculty Form questions are part of the USRI. While these instruments are separate, they are often implemented and completed by students at the same time and most academic staff receive their USRI and Faculty Form results together. Academic staff and students alike see them as one in the same. Therefore, some of the recommendations below refer to the Faculty Forms as well as the USRI. The recommendations on the Faculty Forms are not meant to suggest or imply that the academic units should not be overseeing their own questions. Decisions about Faculty-level questions and the choosing of these questions should remain part of the feedback collected from students and overseen by the appropriate processes within each academic unit.

1 / A System Overhaul is Needed

Feedback collected at the consultations along with the research literature on student feedback and course evaluations show that an overhaul of the USRI system is needed. The current instrument and associated administration processes present significant challenges for students to provide meaningful feedback about their experiences, and for academic staff to use that feedback in ways that enhance teaching practices and the student experiences. As consultations progressed, it became clear that concerns from students and academic staff could not be addressed by making adjustments in the wording of the questions on the current instrument.

In addition to replacing the current USRI instrument, changes also need to be made to the administration processes. For example, timing was often cited as being an issue – feedback was being sought too late in a term while students were stressed and experiencing competing demands. It was also clear that academic staff and students were conflating the concerns they have about the USRI with concerns about the Faculty Forms. As mentioned earlier, Faculty Forms are usually administered alongside the USRI; students fill them out at the same time, and results from each are released together. In the consultations, these two instruments were collectively considered by many to be “the USRI.” Many academic staff did not know that the open-response questions were from their Faculty Forms, which are administered and overseen by their academic unit and that these are separate to the USRI, which is administered by the institution. Many participants commented that the way information is collected—through the physical distribution of the USRI and Faculty Forms—was tedious, time-consuming and inefficient. One participant said, “*a streamlined approach is needed,*” and this was echoed by many in relation to the process, timing, and collecting of quantitative and qualitative feedback.

It is important to note that campus consultations took place before and during the first four months of the switch to remote and online learning due to the COVID pandemic. Prior to changes brought about by COVID, approximately 85% of USRI and Faculty Forms were administered to students during class time through a variety of processes, dependent on the program. In some programs, academic staff are required to recruit a colleague or student to distribute, collect and

return the forms to their program office; in others, office staff visit a class to collect USRI and Faculty Form feedback during a timed window determined by the course instructor.

What we have also learned in the shift to remote and online teaching and learning is that the Class Climate system used to administer the USRI and Faculty Forms cannot be easily integrated with Peoplesoft or other platforms used to support teaching. Many processes are manual, including getting emails out to students to remind them to complete these questionnaires. This has had an impact on completion rates and exposed the technical challenges associated with the current technology used to support USRI and Faculty Form distribution and collection.

In addition to a lack of understanding about the difference between the USRI and the Faculty Forms, students and academic staff often reported that they felt the purpose of the USRI was unclear and were unsure how the information collected was used or how they were supposed to use the information.

We repeatedly heard that one instrument (like the USRI) cannot be a measure of teaching effectiveness, and there is the perception amongst academic staff that the USRI is seen in this way: *“The purpose of [the] USRI is unclear and it cannot achieve all stated objectives...”* and questions repeatedly surfaced in consultations such as: *“Is it to aid students? Is it to assess instructors, or to improve instruction?”*

We also heard that the questions should focus on students’ learning experiences and minimize the opportunity for bias for those academic staff who identify as members of equity-seeking groups or who are assigned to teach courses that are difficult and have a reputation with students. These factors can affect students’ perceptions of course instructors’ teaching and therefore impact USRI ratings.

The limitations and constraints of the USRI system mean that revising the present USRI questions using Class Climate, the current technology platform, would not sufficiently address the changes needed. Therefore, the first actions for an overhaul of the student feedback system include:

- a. Action: Develop a new course feedback questionnaire that combines a series of institutionally set questions, Faculty and/or program-level chosen questions, options for question modules for specific course types and modalities and includes a bank of optional questions that can be chosen by a course instructor.
- b. Action: Secure a new technology platform to support and administer a new course feedback questionnaire as described in Action (a) above.
- c. Action: Use the working group’s guiding principles and the following actions in this report to inform the set of new questions to make up a new course feedback questionnaire.
- d. Action: Ensure the use of student feedback on their course learning experiences is clearly articulated and understood by all stakeholders (academic staff, students, administrators).

- e. Action: Establish a Student Feedback on Course Learning Experiences governance and oversight committee to oversee the development, implementation and maintenance of a new technology system for student feedback, and that would report to GFC.
- f. Action: Develop a new name for a course feedback questionnaire that is more reflective of the purpose – to collect student feedback on their learning experiences.

2 / Focus Students' Feedback on their Learning and Course Experiences

Throughout our consultations, we repeatedly heard academic staff say they care deeply about teaching and their desire to get meaningful feedback from students. They expressed a need and want for a student feedback system that they can use to help them grow in their teaching practices. Specifically, participants discussed wanting to try something new in their teaching and to be able to use student feedback to better understand how their students learned and what aspects of a course helped them learn.

Academic staff overwhelmingly supported an overhaul of the current system and a development of a new course feedback system with questions that focus on students' learning experiences and are connected to the research on teaching and learning in higher education. Many consultation participants emphasized the importance of focusing *on learning experience and not on students' ratings of teaching*.

Consultations with students also supported an overhaul of the current system. Students indicated that they wanted a questionnaire that would allow them to identify what aspects of the course supported their learning, and the ability to provide written feedback that allowed them to share what supported their experiences and learning, and what could be improved. Students expressed the desire for a new system to collect feedback that would allow them to highlight great teaching and learning practices, as well as indicate course experiences that could be improved, or that need addressing.

In our consultations, academic staff repeatedly noted that factors outside of their control can influence students' perceptions of learning experiences. These factors can affect their course ratings, especially when the questions are not well focused on learning and activities, but rather on course instructor behavior and characteristics. One academic staff member commented:

"It asks students if they think the course is useful for their education, which in many cases they really do not know, and rates the teaching abilities of the professor, which in turns reflects the popularity or 'likeness' of the instructor."

A repeated concern among academic staff was that students are not trained to assess teaching, and so the current USRI can (unintendedly) serve, instead, as a *"popularity contest."* Several comments in the data suggest that ratings given by students on the current USRI can serve to modify instructor behaviour in ways that might disadvantage students. For example, the question 'are the assessment methods fair?', could be rated low by students because the assessment

method was hard, or innovative, or did not test the intended learning objectives of the course. This rating does not provide the course instructor with information on what to change, or why the methods were perceived to be unfair. As shared by one participant, questions like this can create a situation where the USRI *“promotes grade inflation and lack of risk-taking in teaching.”*

Some academic staff shared that with student feedback on their Faculty Forms they had received comments that expressed racism, sexism, homophobia and personalized attacks towards them. These participants also shared that they felt they had nowhere to turn for support, and these comments had an impact on their mental health and wellbeing. This has led academic staff to feel that their personal identity impacts their rating, with equity seeking groups receiving lower ratings and harsher judgements from students. This finding is addressed in more detail in Theme Four.

Another sentiment present in the data is that a new course feedback questionnaire would benefit from shifting to questions that asked students about their learning and their experiences in a course, instead of course instructor characteristics. Changing the focus of the questions will help students offer more constructive information on what supported their learning and what could be improved. One participant said:

“We need to incorporate more self-reflection and awareness from students - for example, students need to express and articulate their learning and how it applies to their life or how it can transform their life.”

Focusing the questions on students’ learning activities and experiences would address two important issues. First, academic staff need insights into what their students are doing in order to understand aspects of their teaching that are working for students and as well as the areas for growth in their teaching practice. Where questions solicit feedback about issues outside of their control (i.e., where the class is scheduled, location, date of the final exam) or focus on rating instructors’ personal characteristics (such as enthusiasm), important feedback on student learning is missed. Focusing on students’ experiences will also help identify aspects of a course that are barriers to students’ learning and help ensure that courses are designed to be fair, equitable and inclusive for all learners. Second, focusing questions on the learning experiences of students can help mitigate and eliminate feedback that focuses on personality and other factors that are not related to learning.

The recommendations addressed under this theme are:

- a. Action: Questions should reflect current research on teaching and learning in higher education with a focus on feedback related to students’ learning experience in the course.
- b. Action: The name of the new instrument should reflect the new focus on students’ learning experiences and not the *rating* of the course instructor.

- c. Action: Ensure all academic units have systems in place for students to provide more time-sensitive feedback to a course instructor and, when appropriate, to academic leaders (such as department heads, program directors, associate deans, deans) should serious issues arise, or a student is not comfortable directing feedback to the course instructor.

3 / Flexible and Customizable Questionnaire Design

Throughout consultations, academic staff noted that the USRI does not make room for the array of disciplines, contexts, and teaching practices that are characteristic of a modern university. In our consultations, academic staff, noted that the USRI instrument cannot be adapted to specific course contexts such as clinical settings, laboratory settings, field experiences, group study, and for courses with multiple instructors and teaching assistants. Some academic staff also reported that those teaching difficult or challenging topics receive lower ratings and harsher comments. Finally, academic staff and students indicated that they would appreciate a course feedback system that could allow for customized feedback to be solicited throughout a course, rather than just at the end of the course.

One academic staff member highlighted the current USRI questions limitations by saying:

“Taking ... the type of courses into account [some] courses are less favourable to students than [others]. The course instructor [is] fighting from the beginning for approval.”

Another participant gave voice to the way teaching challenging content can influence students’ feedback:

“Intentionally disruptive activities and transformative pedagogies can create discomfort that would result in a (lower) evaluation that overlooks the intended goals.”

One consultation participant drew attention to the course modality as something that influences students’ experiences, sharing their perception that, *“online courses are evaluated more harshly.”* Cumulatively, these insights illustrate how the USRI’s 11 static questions do not account for how diverse the learning experiences are across academic programs in the subject matter, learning environment and modality, and pedagogical approaches. The questions on the current USRI were not developed to account for the array of course types and approaches, highlighting the need for question modules that are specific to the learning environment and learning experiences of the course (i.e., online and face-to-face, clinical, lab, field and place-based settings, capstone courses, and experiential learning courses, to name a few).

Some participants emphasized flexibility and customizability to make student feedback more meaningful and actionable. As one academic staff member said:

“I think the flexibility to include different questions or sets of questions to personalize according to the teaching methods might be useful ... I’d, perhaps, like to see questions

tailored more to me and my teaching, asking questions which give more insight into how students have learned..."

In consultation with student groups, we learned that students would like to be able to give more specific feedback about their course experiences. Students indicated they would value the opportunity to give reasons for their rating or written feedback alongside the quantitative questions. Some students suggested it would be helpful—alongside each quantitative question—to be able to suggest *"an actionable, specific change the instructor could make"* and explain why they chose their rating.

Academic staff also echoed those responses to the quantitative questions lack context. One consultation participant noted:

"USRI alludes to a rather narrow view of teaching; I particularly miss aspects of community engagement and informed practice and critical thinking reflected in the surveys."

Another commented:

"I wish that when a student says a numerical answer they have to follow up with a rationale for their choice. Maybe not always but if you say something is "unacceptable" maybe there should be a follow-up question, "why is it unacceptable?"

Finally, we heard from graduate students that when they are in teaching assistant roles, feedback is not collected through the USRI system. Some graduate students receive feedback on their teaching assistant roles if their department or program office offers Feedback Forms but not all programs collect this feedback. Other graduate students reported that feedback is collected on their teaching assistantship roles but not shared back with them, so they are not able to access the student feedback. Graduate students expressed a strong desire to have the opportunity to get feedback on their teaching assistantship work as part of a new course feedback system. Undergraduate students also expressed an interest in being able to provide feedback on their teaching assistants, as some shared there is no mechanism (in certain programs) to do so.

Consultation data points to a new student feedback technology system needing to be developed in ways that allow for feedback across diverse teaching and learning experiences and contexts. The recommendations related to this theme are thus:

- a. Action: Adopt a new technology platform that can allow for customization and flexibility, through the integration of questions that can be selected from a question bank, depending on the academic unit, program and/or course context.
- b. Action: Build in opportunities for course instructors to ask specific questions related to their course, including new and innovative methods to support teaching and student learning.

- c. Action: Create a mechanism for feedback in classes that are currently either too small to receive a USRI (where the sample size is statistically too small), or for class sections/components that do not receive a USRI under the current system (i.e., a separate lab component).
- d. Action: Within an new platform ensure academic staff can create opportunities to collect feedback from students during the term.
- e. Action: Include graduate teaching assistants in the new student feedback system, as feedback to this group on their teaching is not consistent across programs.

4 / Advance Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in a New Student Feedback System

Throughout the consultations, we heard concerns that the USRI instrument and Faculty Forms were not designed to minimize or mitigate bias, especially for those who were early-career, those who took risks and introduced new and innovative teaching approaches, those who taught controversial course topics, and those who identified as belonging to equity-seeking groups. Participants shared statements such as, *“much power is given to a very flawed instrument,”* and the USRI is *“not measuring what is important and is not useful in terms of how to improve student learning experiences.”*

Consultations revealed that some academic staff routinely received inappropriate, disrespectful, harmful, racist and gendered comments from students through the Faculty Forms. One participant said, *“students feel free to be racist, sexist in them,”* a concern echoed by many. Another statement reflected many participants’ concerns that, *“there was no accountability and responsibility for [student] comments”* and that students often commented on non-instructional factors related to the personal characteristics of the instructor.

Student groups expressed other EDI-related concerns with the design of the current USRI instrument and the methods used to collect feedback with it and the Faculty Forms. Concerns included that the feedback process is poorly designed for accessibility both in the distribution of forms in class and the limited time provided to complete feedback. For some students with disabilities, the USRI instrument and Faculty Forms are not accessible as they are not available digitally where student can access assistive technologies such as e-readers and dictation.

EDI-related concerns can also be experienced by students. To help ensure equitable and inclusive teaching and learning, course instructors need awareness of how course design and course dynamics shape their learning environments and impact students. Student feedback can identify aspects of the course design, teaching strategies and learning environment foster equitable pathways for their students and maintain a productive learning environment. Opportunities for students to provide feedback around equity, inclusivity and accessibility should be included in a new course feedback system.

Recommendations for actions under this theme are:

- a. Action: Ensure the questions within a new student feedback system are designed to eliminate opportunities for bias and for academic staff from equity seeking groups.
- b. Action: Ensure expertise from the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is on the governance committee overseeing the development and implementation of a new system.
- c. Action: Provide training and professional learning opportunities for those responsible for administering and using student feedback (e.g., Deans, Department Heads, Tenure, Promotion and Merit committees), on how to address bias, racism and harassment, as well as how to support academic staff who are affected. Ensure expertise from the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is involved in the development and offering of educational offerings.
- d. Action: Develop communications, education and training materials that includes information on eliminating bias in feedback, and on addressing bias and harassment if identified in feedback.
- e. Action: Ensure the new course feedback system is accessible and inclusive to staff and learners of all abilities following the principles of universal design for learning.
- f. Action: Include questions in the new course feedback system that provide feedback on equitable, inclusive, and accessible teaching and learning practices and learning environments.
- g. Action: Provide training for academic staff and academic leaders on how to recognize and address barriers to equity and inclusivity for students.
- h. Action: Provide training for students on giving constructive feedback on their experiences and awareness on bias, harassment, and all forms of discrimination.
- i. Action: Develop a process to flag and address harassing, threatening and discriminatory comments, including supports for academic staff and academic leaders when incidents occur.

5 / Embed Indigenous Ways of Knowing in a New System

Indigenous scholars expressed concern that the USRI items did not acknowledge the multiple Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing that exist in approaches to teaching and learning at UCalgary. They felt that the questions had very little relevance to those who teach issues on social justice for Indigenous peoples, and from a critical anti-racist approach. They recommended that the USRI reflect the University's Indigenous Strategy and Indigenous pedagogies, such as the importance of relationality, learning with and in community, land-based learning, Ceremony, and Elders/Traditional Knowledge. They wondered how a process could be designed to reflect parallel processes such as oral systems and traditions and recommended that a future instrument align with the language around transformation that is communicated in the Indigenous Strategy.

Similar to other comments received in the consultations, they felt that the USRI had little value in providing them with meaningful feedback as an academic staff member, including how they

could adjust their teaching practice to improve student learning experiences. They thought the system could be designed to intentionally incorporate more self-reflection and awareness from students on their learning experiences. They also acknowledged that the USRI system and Faculty Forms facilitated bias and racism. Many of the Indigenous Scholars consulted acknowledged that they had experienced gender bias and racism through the USRI questionnaire and Faculty Forms and reflected on how difficult and traumatic these experiences were. Many expressed concerns regarding the anonymity of the USRI, as it removes responsibility and accountability and does not support relationship building.

- a. Action: Ensure representation from the Office of Indigenous Engagement on the governance committee overseeing the development and implementation of a new system.
- b. Action: Ensure the new course feedback system aligns with the Indigenous Strategy and Indigenous ways of knowing and being.
- c. Action: Ensure the new course feedback system reflects and demonstrates value for Indigenous pedagogies, such as the importance of relationality, learning with and in community, land-based learning, Ceremony, and Elders/Traditional Knowledge.
- d. Action: Explore how parallel processes could be reflected in the new course feedback system, including oral systems and traditions.
- e. Action: Provide training and professional learning opportunities for those responsible for administering and using student feedback (e.g., Deans, Department Heads, Tenure, Promotion and Merit committees) on how to support Indigenous scholars and how to understand Indigenous approaches to teaching and learning.

6 / Improve Communication and Education

Throughout the consultations, we heard the importance and need to have a comprehensive institutional communications plan around student feedback and course evaluations. Both academic staff and students discussed the importance and value of feedback, however, many expressed they did not feel this was well communicated across the institution. Students expressed their uncertainty of what happened to their course feedback and how the feedback was being used, or if it was used at all. Academic staff expressed a desire to have feedback from students that was constructive and could help them improve their practice. One academic staff member shared:

“USRI should provide useful and ongoing feedback on students' learning and their experience with different elements / assignments in my course that enables me to continuously improve my course designs, selection of materials/resources and my approach to teaching.”

Several academic staff noted they often receive feedback unrelated to the course, or about issues outside of their control. Examples can include anything from comments about the physical classroom itself to availability of eatery options on campus. These comments suggested to them

that students either don't know the purpose of the USRI and/or lack a clear avenue to communicate concerns and feedback on factors that fall outside of those that the course instructor can influence or change.

We also heard that teaching is complex, and a broader assessment of teaching needs to be viewed from multiple perspectives. Academic staff requested effective communication around the *“need to address what else to do to assess teaching: peer assessment and others need the same level of rigor as is being done with the USRI.”* They also acknowledged concerns regarding the interpretation and use of the USRI and student comments from Faculty Forms in teaching assessment practice. Others suggested that additional clarity, support and training is needed on appropriate use and interpretation of USRIs in assessment.

- a. Action: Develop a comprehensive communications plan for students, academic staff and administration that promotes the value and purpose of student course feedback. Include in the communications, reminders of how course feedback is used.
- b. Action: Develop communications and learning opportunities for students on how to give constructive and professional feedback.
- c. Action: Develop resources and professional learning opportunities for academic staff on how to use and consider student feedback.
- d. Action: Develop resources and professional learning opportunities for Department Heads, Deans and assessment committees on how to use and consider student feedback appropriately and alongside other sources and information on teaching.
- e. Action: Develop resources for academic staff on how to use student feedback in tenure, merit and promotion processes, as well as how to use feedback to support award and grant applications; clearly link to the revised GFC Academic Staff Criteria & Processes Handbook.

7 / Collect student feedback at the Right Time, in the Right Way

It was highlighted in consultations that the administration of the USRI and Faculty Forms, both paper and online versions, is dated and not user-friendly. We repeatedly heard concerns about the waste generated through the paper-based survey and how this approach contradicts the University's Sustainability Strategy. It was also evident in the data *how* the USRI is accessed (paper or email/links to the survey) is a deterrent for students to complete. It was noted by academic staff and students how out-dated the USRI looks and that it does not match current design standards set by the University.

In the consultations, students and academic staff reflected that the timing and administration of the USRI can be problematic. Academic staff felt that with it being administered at the end of a semester, at a time when students are stressed and have many competing priorities, they are not getting thoughtful feedback. Students admitted that during times of stress and with lots of deadlines, they are less likely to take the time to complete the forms and they also shared that when administered in class, they rarely had enough time to think carefully about their ratings

and comments on the Faculty Forms. Academic staff expressed the need for iterative or multiple points of feedback within a singular class to enable a full cycle of learning, feedback, listening and implementation. Students also felt that giving feedback at the end of the term did not benefit them, and they were not able to see the effect of change in the class.

- a. Action: The new course feedback questionnaire should be available as an online tool for completion during a set period that allows students time to provide meaningful feedback.
- b. Action: In order to ensure high response rates, administration of the course feedback should include in-class time to build awareness and encourage participation and completion and additional time outside of class for completion.
- c. Action: Ensure a new technology platform to administer the course feedback questionnaires can be integrated with other systems allowing for automated processes such as email reminders to students to submit their feedback.
- d. Action: Ensure the new system has a reporting feature that is easy to use and interpret, providing academic staff opportunities to view student feedback over time and easily visualize and aggregate feedback.
- e. Action: Ensure a new system has the capability of comment/sentiment analysis so academic staff can have support interpreting written feedback.

Summary

A working group of the General Faculties Council (GFC) Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) was struck to review and advise on the University's course feedback system, the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI). Our review confirmed that the current questions are dated and in need of renewal as is the technology used to support the current system.

A comprehensive consultation plan was developed to capture USRI experiences of academic staff and student groups. Over several months, data were collected from robust and wide-spread consultations and the themed results informed the recommendations and actions provided in this report.

The working group recommends a complete system overhaul, based on the inability of the current system and Class Climate software to adequately meet our institutional needs. This will require relinquishing the USRI instrument and associated reports for a new student course feedback system that integrates with necessary university processes and enterprise systems. The scope of this change is transformative but also doable. It will require an ongoing oversight governance committee to ensure the system and supports continue to address the needs of academic staff and students. It is recommended the new system **focus on learning** and not the individual instructor with a **survey design** that integrates modularity and flexibility and is customizable to the needs of the course, program or instructor. Questions should **minimize bias** and give space for **Indigenous ways of knowing and being** in the feedback model. There also needs to be dedicated **communications and training** for all stakeholders and allow for ease of

administering and reporting so that students have more choices in completing the surveys and academic staff can make more sense of student feedback.

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Appendix I: Guiding Principles for Student Feedback on Course Learning Experiences

The following seven guiding principles were developed by the working group and derived from the literature review and environmental scan. These principles were created to help inform decision-making processes moving towards a revised questionnaire. They were also shared throughout the consultation process for feedback and to help guide our discussions. The consultation process confirmed strong support for the principles, and their use in guiding future conversations and decisions related to student feedback processes.

1. Learning-focused: Questions are focused on students' learning experiences. Aggregate data provide academic staff valuable feedback for learning about their teaching practice.
2. Minimize bias: Questionnaire uses language that limits the likelihood of biased responses. Reporting processes are designed to minimize the effects of bias.
3. Valid and Reliable: Questionnaire measures what it is intended to measure, and responses demonstrate internal consistency.
4. Modular: Includes modules that can be selected for different learning modalities and experiences (e.g., clinical, experiential, or online learning).
5. Flexible & Customizable: Allows for standard set of questions and Faculty/Program questions. Allows individual instructors the opportunity to add additional questions.
6. Streamlined & Secure: Easy to access and use for staff and students. Data reports are secure and meaningful.
7. Responsible Use & Reporting: Used as intended, as a report on students' learning experiences. Used to help identify areas for strength and growth and as a reflective tool for teaching. Connected to qualitative feedback, allowing for meaningful interpretation of ratings. Transparent reporting on statistical validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

USRI Recommendation Report

USRI Working Group

January 13, 2022

Background

- Institutions across Canada are conducting institutional reviews of student evaluations of instruction
- USRI hasn't been formally reviewed since 2003
- There have been significant advancement in last 18 years:
 - Research on effective teaching practices
 - Research on course evaluations
 - Technology and reporting platforms
 - Understanding of systemic bias
- USRI Working Group formed in January 2019 reporting to TLC GFC
 - Conduct a system review
 - Bring forward recommendation report

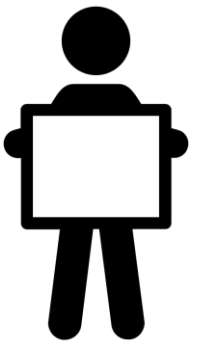


USRI Working Group Timeline

Completion Date	Action
JAN – JUN / 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed literature review• Completed environmental scan (U15, international)• Developed consultation plan
SEP – DEC / 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposed and passed 3 changes to the USRI survey and reports through GFC governance process
JAN – JUL / 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed campus consultations on the USRI – academic units, student groups, strategic groups/plans
Spring-Summer 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drafted USRI recommendation report

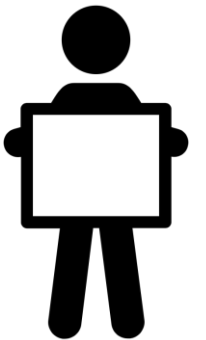
Key Recommendations: a system overhaul is needed

- A new questionnaire with questions that **focus on student learning experiences**.
- **Rename** the questionnaire to better reflect purpose
- **Formation of a new standing committee** to oversee the development of a new course feedback questionnaire and ongoing maintenance
- **questions in a new system are modern, flexible and customizable** to the learning context.
- Adopt a new technology platform replaces the current ClassClimate platform



Key Recommendations (cont.)

- **Improve communication** on the importance of student feedback
- **Develop resources and materials** that support students, academic staff and academic leaders in completing and using student feedback
- **Embed equity, diversity and inclusion practices and expertise** into all aspects of a student feedback system
- Develop and implement opportunities for **Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being and Indigenous Practices** into student feedback practices.





ACADEMIC PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE
Report to General Faculties Council
for the meeting held on December 13, 2021

This report is submitted on behalf of the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC).

Approval for the Creation of three new concentrations within the BSc program in Biological Sciences: Genetics and Evolution, Biotechnology, and Biodiversity and Conservation

The APPC reviewed the proposal from the Faculty of Science to create three new concentrations in Genetics and Evolution, Biotechnology, and Biodiversity and Conservation within the Bachelor of Science (BSc) program in Biological Sciences (BISI).

The APPC learned that the new concentrations will be optional for students and have been designed to improve student experience, increase experiential learning opportunities and provide students with the option to explore emerging areas in BISI.

The APPC approved the creation of the concentrations in Genetics and Evolution, Biotechnology, and Biodiversity and Conservation within the BSc program in Biological Sciences.

Approval for the Creation of the Bachelor of Design in City Innovation (BDCI) program within the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape

The APPC reviewed the proposal from the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape (SAPL) for the creation of the Bachelor of Design in City Innovation (BDCI).

The APPC learned the BDCI will be the first undergraduate degree offered within the SAPL and that the BDCI will prepare students for careers in design and city innovation or progress to professional programs following degree completion.

The APPC discussed the rationale for the staffing positions and requested that the proposed staffing positions be confirmed to be in compliance with the Collective Agreement. The APPC also provided suggestions to develop an Indigenous student bridging pathway for entry into the BDCI and for the SAPL to work with the Faculty of Kinesiology to review potential elective course offerings for the BDCI.

The APPC approved the creation of the BDCI program within the SAPL.



TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE
Report to General Faculties Council
for the meeting held December 14, 2021

This report is submitted on behalf of the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC).

Creation of a Flexible Undergraduate Work-Integrated Learning Course

The TLC received a presentation on the proposed creation of a flexible Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) academic course for undergraduate students, and heard that:

- This is different from co-op, internship, or practicum learning
- WIL is one of five types of experiential learning. WIL is curricular experiential learning that occurs in a hosted workplace or practice setting, can occur at the course or program level, and provides learning outcomes including those related to future employability.
- Experiential learning is identified as a priority within the University's Framework for Growth, and is part of the University's performance-based budgeting
- It is known from the first-year student National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) feedback that many students are interested in having a WIL experience, but the senior-year student NSSE feedback indicates that not all have had the opportunity to achieve this. The proposed WIL course will enhance WIL access, help to meet WIL targets, and will be scalable.
- The development of the WIL course is currently in a broad consultation phase, and it is planned that the course will be approved in 2023
- The pilot of the WIL course will be available to any undergraduate student who is in a program without a required WIL component and who has completed a minimum of 30 post-secondary units
- The WIL course will be in two concurrent parts: classroom learning and workplace learning. The workplace setting can be a setting for paid work, volunteering, or career exploration.

The TLC discussed that:

- The cross-disciplinary nature of the course is applauded
- Parameters for student protection, including insurance, oversight of the work, and general safety, are important
- Because it is a stated University goal that each undergraduate student have two Experiential Learning experiences during their studies, it would be good for this course to be expanded in the future
- It is important for students to develop necessary skills and for their WIL experience to be meaningful. Students will need to learn how to articulate the skills that they have learned.

In response to questions, it was reported that:

- A student with a practicum component in their program will not be eligible to take the new course
- The course will be appropriate across disciplines

- The proponents are considering if a similar offering could be created for graduate students, and the Faculty of Graduate Studies is developing a transformative talent program which builds on its existing WIL program
- There will be a targeted communications plan, initially focusing on students in Arts and Science, but students from other Faculties will be eligible. The initial offering of the course will be a small pilot, to allow for evaluation and adaptation, and it will expand over time.
- This is meant to provide WIL opportunities for students who are currently experiencing barriers to WIL, and so is not intended for students who have required or optional WIL opportunities in their Faculty
- The provincial government's expectations relating to WIL do not specify the skills to be learned or the industries to be partnered with

Round Table – Emerging Issues and Initiatives in Teaching and Learning

The TLC was given an opportunity to talk about current matters relating to teaching and learning, and discussion included that:

- The Learning Technologies Production Coaches are streamlining the process for responding to requests, to enable more responsiveness to instructors
- There is uncertainty about the Winter semester, and what the classroom experience will be
- The teaching and learning expectations of instructors and students have evolved during the pandemic and will continue to evolve and shift, and it will take time for the classroom infrastructure to catch up to what is desired
- When teaching and learning is occurring within a hybrid model, care must be taken to ensure equity between online and in-person learners
- Instructing within a hybrid model adds burden to instructors
- The University's safety measures during the pandemic are understood to be necessary, but there is potential for discord, such as between the vaccinated and unvaccinated, and this must be mitigated
- Conversations about what is best for the teaching and learning experience, such as hybrid teaching and flipped learning, are needed
- Some instructors are accommodating students who cannot attend class at this time, such as those who are quarantining or staying home with children, by giving the option to attend virtually and helping them to keep up with coursework. This flexibility would also help students who are travelling as part of their work as a research assistant.

Standing Reports

The TLC received reports on the current activities of the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning, Graduate Students' Association, and Students' Union.

Leslie Reid, Co-Chair, and Amy Warren, Academic Co-Chair



RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Report to General Faculties Council

for the meeting held December 16, 2021

This report is submitted on behalf of the Research and Scholarship Committee (RSC).

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the Research Portfolio - Dimensions Update

The RSC received an update on the University's participation in the Dimensions: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Canada pilot program, and heard that:

- The Dimensions program's core principle is that diversity fosters increased research excellence and innovation, and the University is committed to achieving greater EDI
- The Dimensions program focuses on five equity deserving groups: women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minority or racialized groups, and members of LGBTQ2+ communities
- The University is one of seventeen institutions participating in the pilot program, and the University has appointed an executive committee and a steering committee to help accomplish the requirements of participating. The institutions have an opportunity to receive a Dimensions award that recognizes their progress in improving EDI at their institution.
- The University has made progress, despite the impacts of the pandemic
- The system by which the University will be assessed is being developed, and the deadline to apply for an award is in the Fall of 2022
- The University has just launched an employment equity census and a student census, and this data will be useful
- The University's Dimensions steering committee has established five Equitable Pathways working groups, populated with persons from across units and including faculty, staff and students, and there is one working group for each of the five equity deserving groups. The working groups are studying EDI data and individuals' experiences and are reporting back to the steering committee. This information will be shared with the University community.

In response to questions, it was reported that:

- The key performance indicators for assessing the University's progress in improving EDI are specific to Dimensions and were communicated to the University as part of the Dimensions program process
- The Dimensions program is similar to the Canada Research Chairs (CRC) action plan, but it applies to the University's entire research ecosystem and not just CRCs, and it builds upon the Athena Swan Charter's principles
- The Dimensions program requires that the University collect quantitative and qualitative data on each of the equity deserving groups, and that the data be from across all disciplines and include faculty, staff and students. The Dimensions program is seeking evidence of concrete actions and measurable impacts.

- The four categories of assessment of EDI progress are Initiating, Establishing, Advancing, and Transforming. The University is currently in stage 3 (Advancing) but intends to arrive at stage 4 (Transforming).
- A 60-page report providing guidelines to hiring faculty and staff members in consideration of EDI is forthcoming
- EDI and excellence are sometimes framed as a tradeoff, but history demonstrates that this is not true. Qualified persons can be blocked by obstacles and biases, and robust conversations about this are needed.
- The University must make effort to disrupt ignorance, biases, discrimination, racism, and other systemic obstacles, so that there can be confidence that hiring committees are operating fittingly

Discussion included:

- If EDI in the student population improves, then it can be expected that EDI in the doctoral student, postdoctoral scholar, and academic staff populations will naturally improve
- Some disciplines, such as Finance, do not typically attract persons from all equity deserving groups. Some universities can offer generous salaries to attract persons, but the University cannot afford to do this.
- Training and guidance are needed so that researchers' applications and processes appropriately address EDI, as EDI will be an integral part of all research funding initiatives going forward. The presenters indicated that resources are being developed and capacity within Research Services is being built.

Robert Thompson, Co-Chair, and Dora Tam, Academic Co-Chair

**Report to the General Faculties Council
on the Meeting of
The Board of Governors (Open Session), December 10, 2021 (8:00 am)
From the Member of the Board nominated by GFC**

The Chair of the Board, Geeta Sankappanavar, called the meeting to order at 8:16 am with a welcome to external guests and approval of the meeting agenda and identification of any existing conflicts of interest amongst the Board Members.

Michael Van Hee, Interim Vice-President (Finance and Services) - Development presented the safety moment about a leaders' role in psychological safety.

Following the safety moment and approval of previous meeting minutes, the discussion moved to the additional action items:

- Approval of the 2022-2023 Tuition and Fees
- Approval of the 2022-2023 Residence Rates
- Approval of the 2022-2023 Meal Plan Rates
- Approval of the 2022-2023 Parking Rates
- Copyright Reserve Release and Update

All items were approved by vote by Boards Members

Three information items were then presented:

- Report from the President
- 2021 Continuing Education Enrolment Report
- Indigenous Strategy Progress Report

There being **no other business**, the Open Session of the Board Meeting was then adjourned at 11:03 am.

Sincerely,

Joule Bergerson