



**UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY**

GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL

Approved Minutes

Meeting #599

Thursday, June 11, 2020, 1:30 p.m.

By Zoom platform

Voting Members

E. McCauley, Chair	E. Carr	P. Gimby	M. O'Brien	D. Sinasac
D. Marshall, Vice-Chair	O. Chapman	D. Hodgins	A. Paquette	B. Singh
S. Abraha	R. Clements	I. Holloway	D. Paskevich	D. Slater
B. Adams	L. Dalgetty	F. Jalilehvand	N. Peters	J. Smits
O. Alp	S. Davidson	A. Jenney	J. Pieper	M. Tarailo-Graovac
D. Altafsh	A. dela Cruz	C. Jessel	Q. Pittman	S. Thrift
J. Anderson	J. Dewald	B. Kahanyshyn	R. Ramdhaney	A. Timm
K. Baral	S. Eaton	S. Kozak	L. Reid	T. Tombe
S. Barker	J. Eiserman	R. Lauer	M. Reid	B. Uppal
M. Bauer	S. Farheen	S. LeBlanc	J. Rodney	A. Viczko
T. Beattie	J. Feng	K. Lee	P. Rogers	M. Wang
B. Becker	F. Finley	J. Lock	M.J. Romaniuk	H. Warsame
S. Benseler	S. Franceschet	K. Lukowiak	W. Rosehart	S. Weaver
L. Benson	M. Fraser	M. McDonough	A. Saweczko	P. Werthner
J. Bergerson	M. Gavrilova	B. Maini	T. Shandro	B. Wylant
C. Bousman	D. Gereluk	B. Mayer	N. Shaw	R. Yates
J. Brar	W. Ghali	E. Montes Garces	J. Sieppert	M. Zhang
E. Burgess	P. Gibson	A. Murray	R. Sigurdson	

Guests

C. Bertsch, Sexual Violence Support Advocate – present for Item 8
D. Book, Legal Counsel – present for Item 8

Observers

F. Abdi, Students' Union
J. Alho, Assoc. Vice-President (Government and Community Engagement)
J. Carter, University Secretariat
K. Hamilton, President's Office
M. Hart, Vice-Provost (Indigenous Engagement)
T. Hodzic, University Secretariat
C. Hogan, Senior Assoc. Vice-President (Strategic Communications)
K. Jackson, General Counsel
C. Johns, Provost's Office
J. Krygier, Faculty Association
M. Kularatne, Students' Union
N. Molina, incoming Chair, Management and Professional Staff
J. Ruwanpura, Vice-Provost (International)
F. Strzelczyk, Deputy Provost
W. Tynan, Provost's Office

Secretary

S. Belcher

Scribe

E. Sjogren

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Conflict of Interest Declaration

No conflicts were declared.

2. Remarks of the Chair

The Chair included the following in his remarks:

- This is the first General Faculties Council (GFC) meeting for Bernhard Mayer, Interim Dean of the Faculty of Science, and this is the last GFC meeting for Jackie Sieppert, Dean of the Faculty of Social Work, Paul Rogers, President of the Faculty Association, Stacy Kozak, Chair of the Management and Professional Staff Executive, and several of the elected academic staff members and appointed members of GFC
- The Executive Leadership Team received an open letter in response to the University's denouncement of anti-Black racism and racism in all forms, calling for the University to set actionable steps with associated metrics to demonstrate progress. The University will be exploring all suggestions to address racism at the University, and the incoming Vice-Provost (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)), Malinda Smith, will be one of the leaders in the University's efforts to take thoughtful and substantive action in this area. Inclusivity is a top priority in the University's Academic Plan, and conversations in the months to come will be vital in moving the University forward in identifying and tackling systemic barriers and biases.
- Through means such as an op-ed publication and regular meetings with government, representatives of the University continue to express that the University can strongly contribute to addressing the province's challenges during these turbulent times caused by the economic recession, COVID-19 pandemic, high unemployment levels, and systemic changes
- The provincial government has launched a review of the post-secondary system, and a report is expected in late 2020
- A ten-year plan for the University's growth is being developed, and this will be brought forward later in the Fall term. A campus community town hall will be held later this month to discuss and collect feedback on ideas for this. Some related points include:
 - Great universities present a strong value proposition, as they contribute to diversification, innovation, and economic growth, and they are therefore worth investing in
 - The pandemic triggered a move toward future trends in education and research, including online interactions
 - Because it is expected that provincial funding, grants, philanthropy, and investment revenue will decrease, while costs and inflation will increase, the University must prepare for change and to weather this. The University will need to grow and stabilize revenue, optimize resources, refocus operations, establish partnerships, and find efficiencies. The University must also focus on the growth of its reputation, built around innovation, entrepreneurial thinking, advanced technology, collaborations, and strong connections with community, as this will draw quality students and faculty.
 - There are uncertainties about how performance-based funding will impact the University, but it is possible that this may provide some stability and predictable funding

- Retreats, meetings, and consultations with the campus community have been held in order to gather information about people's aspirations for how the University will look ten years from now. Three concepts have resonated: 1) the University should develop a strong brand in order to differentiate itself from other universities; 2) the University should focus on its areas of academic excellence; and 3) the University must move boldly into the future.
- The University will not be replacing the Eyes High Strategy, Academic Plan or Research Plan, but will be developing the growth strategy in the context of these
- The provincial government has agreed to eliminate the recently-announced cap on certain post-secondary expenditures, in recognition that institutions can raise funding from other sources

3. Remarks of the Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair included the following in her remarks:

- The University has been working to address systemic inequities through activities such as hiring a Vice-Provost (EDI); studying the employee engagement survey results; conducting salary equity reviews; implementing the Respect in the Workplace Program, Campus Mental Health Strategy, and Indigenous Strategy; cluster hiring with an EDI lens; participating in the Dimensions: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Canada pilot project; restructuring the University's Office of Diversity, Equity and Protected Disclosure; reviewing the University's policies and procedures from an EDI perspective; revising student and staff orientations to enhance EDI information; and creating the EDI Dashboard which will be reported upon annually. An EDI town hall will be held following the arrival of Malinda Smith, Vice-Provost (EDI) to the University in August. Members of the University community are encouraged to speak out if racist actions are observed.
- Faculties submitted their Fall 2020 plans at the end of May, and these are being reviewed by the Academic Crisis Management Team. It is expected that 16% of undergraduate courses and 25% of graduate courses will be offered face-to-face in the Fall, with some Faculties offering more face-to-face programming than others. The University will gradually re-open, and it is expected that 20-30% of the University's population will return to the campuses in the Fall, with persons who do not need to be on campus asked to continue to work from home. Decisions about which buildings will re-open will be made in June, and Facilities is developing signage to support appropriate distancing and will provide hand sanitizer.

4. Question Period

In response to questions, it was reported that:

- The 2020 QS World University Rankings were developed from data that is now a few years old, and so the University's drop in the rankings cannot be attributed to recent provincial budget cuts. The University will be assessing the rankings carefully, as these do help to identify where improvements could be made.
- Decisions are currently being made about the Fall 2020 term, and the plan for the Winter 2021 term will be announced in early October. It is appreciated that members of the University community want to be able to make forward plans, but there are many unknowns at this time, including whether there will be second or third waves of illness, and so focus remains on the Fall 2020 term at this time.

- Announcements will be made soon about matters such as the re-opening of the University's recreation facilities, the ability of laboratories to re-admit members of the public, the re-opening of the University's theatres, and the return of support staff members who were placed on reduced duties or temporarily laid off. The University was surprised by the provincial government's adjustment of which activities are included in Phase 2 of re-opening, and decisions are now being made to align with this.
- Enrolment is 2-3% above where we were last year

5. Safety Moment

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Linda Dalgetty spoke about the "EHS 2019 Injury Incident Analysis" report, and noted that workspace ergonomic assessments are possible through Staff Wellness.

6. Approval of the May 14, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the General Faculties Council meeting held on May 14, 2020 be approved.

Carried

7. Elections

a) Two Academic Staff Members of GFC to the GFC Executive Committee

b) Three Academic Staff Members to an Advisory Search Committee for a Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

The following persons were elected:

GFC Executive Committee

April Viczko, Faculty of Arts

Meghan McDonough, Faculty of Kinesiology

Advisory Search Committee for a Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Nancy Moules, Faculty of Nursing

Lisa Young, Faculty of Arts

Benedikt Hallgrimsson, Cumming School of Medicine

8. Recommendation of Revisions to the Sexual Violence Policy

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Deborah Book, Legal Counsel, and Carla Bertsch, Sexual Violence Support Advocate, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents provided an overview of the history of this item, and reported that the proposed revisions to the Sexual Violence Policy were arrived at following extensive consultation, including the GFC in March
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - Clear terms will be set before the Office, Complainant and Respondent engage in a supported conversation towards resolution. It is possible that this level of detail will be added to the policy in the future.
 - The W.A. Ranches is a University facility, and not a field station, and so it is not mentioned in the list of field stations in Section 3k
 - The reference to ‘criminal offense’ has been removed from the brief definition of Sexual Assault in Section 3s, and moved to Section 4.9a, which describes Sexual Assault in more detail
 - Section 4.14 is refers to the information in Section 4.13
 - Malinda Smith, incoming Vice-Provost (EDI), has been consulted and has had input into the revised policy
 - Institutions have taken a range of approaches to developing sexual violence policies, and some institutions have large sexual violence response teams. The University’s policy is in alignment with emerging practices in this area, and it is believed that the proposed revisions to the policy are an improvement to the University’s existing policy.
 - Data is being collected securely in order to protect confidentiality, and reporting will be done thoughtfully
 - If post-doctoral scholars are not eligible to access the University’s Staff Wellness or Employee and Family Assistance programs due to their funding source, they will be referred to community supports
 - Section 4.15 no longer requires an annual report to the Board of Governors in order to allow for more flexibility in reporting
- Discussion included:
 - Section 4.32 defines Supported Conversations in the second sentence. It was suggested that this be moved to the Definitions section of the policy.
 - It is important that faculty and staff receive training on how to receive disclosures

Moved/Seconded

That the General Faculties Council (GFC) recommend that the Board of Governors approve the revisions to the Sexual Violence Policy, as set out in the documents provided to the GFC.

Carried**9. Student Experience Report**

Susan Barker, Vice-Provost (Student Experience), presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Provost and Vice-President (Academic) remarked that the annual Student Experience Report usually focuses on a theme, and that the theme for this year's presentation is the student experience during the COVID-19 pandemic
- The presenter observed that the COVID-19 experience is a small part of the 2019-2020 academic year, but has been extremely challenging. Students have experienced a variety of challenges, including coursework and other uncertainties, the stress of living differently, the inability for some to return home, and financial hardships. The University has experience in adapting to unexpected events, such as the 2014 Brentwood tragedy, and has done so again at this time.
- The presenter included the following in her presentation:
 - Students have been provided one-on-one academic supports online (virtual front desk, academic support, writing support, exploratory and registration advising, and registration assistance) and access to online events (Grad Success Week, a workshop series, virtual study halls, a breakfast with the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies)
 - The decision to allow students to choose CR/F rather than a grade for the Winter 2020 term resulted in 14,373 individual course grade changes. This was a significant extra administrative effort, but was important for students.
 - Student health and wellness supports include access to virtual appointments with physicians and mental health practitioners, and access to mental health support through email. Students have expressed appreciation, and even preference, for these types of appointments and so these will likely be retained in some form when normal practices return.
 - Student social connections have been supported through the UCalgary Together event series (facilitated online activities including gardening, bike maintenance, knitting, learning nutrition, and exercising); an international conversation group; online games nights; trivia events; meditation, prayer, study groups and other activities hosted by the Faith and Spirituality Centre; one-on-one peer support provided by the Women's Resource Centre; and Faculty seminars
 - The June convocation ceremonies were cancelled, but alternate celebrations will be held for the 4,824 students graduating this month. Each student will receive a congratulatory package, and there will be an online graduation event on June 25, a social media campaign, and a billboard message. These graduating students will also be eligible to attend a future convocation ceremony if they wish to walk across the stage.
- As we remain in these uncertain times, student supports will continue to include live support through virtual reception desks, the answering (and redirecting, if necessary) of emails, targeted newsletters for specific groups, the development and maintenance of FAQ pages, and the availability of resources for financial and other pressing needs
- The presenter remarked that the student experience will continue to be a high priority for the University, and feedback is welcomed
- There were no questions

10. Standing Reports

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda, for information only:

- a) Report on the May 20, 2020 GFC Executive Committee (EC) Meeting

- b) Annual Report of the EC
- c) Report on the April 27, May 4, May 14 and May 25, 2020 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC) Meetings
- d) Annual Report of the APPC
- e) Report on the May 19, 2020 Research and Scholarship Committee (RSC) Meeting
- f) Annual Report of the RSC
- g) Report on the May 21, 2020 Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) Meeting
- h) Annual Report of the TLC
- i) Report on the May 29, 2020 Board of Governors Meeting
- j) Policy Development Update

In response to a question, it was reported that applicants to the Cumming School of Medicine and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine are assessed based on a variety of criteria, and that the admissions processes, including the use of the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), are being reviewed.

11. Other Business

There was no other business.

12. Adjournment

The Chair thanked the members for their commitment to governance and the fulsome discussions at GFC meetings.

Moved/Seconded

That the General Faculties Council adjourn the June 11, 2020 meeting.

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 3:31 p.m.

Susan Belcher
University Secretary