



GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL

Approved Minutes

Meeting #607

Thursday, May 13, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

By Zoom platform

Voting Members

E. McCauley, Chair	S. Cork	A. Jenney	J. Pieper	L. Stoffregen
T. Balsler, Vice-Chair	L. Dalgetty	C. Jessel	Q. Pittman	M. Tarailo-Graovac
B. Adams	A. Dambrowitz	D. Joshi	R. Plume	S. Thrift
T. Akhtar	S. Davidson	J. Kortbeek	T. Poffenroth	A. Timm
A. Alase	S. Eaton	R. Lauer	J. Poissant	A. Viczko
A. Alcantara	A. Estefan	S. LeBlanc	A. Qayyum	M. Wang
S. Alexander	M. Fraser	K.Y. Lee	S. Raj	S. Weaver
T. Anderson for J. Meddings	D. Gereluk	J. Lock	L. Reid	G. Welch
S. Barker	W. Ghali	R. McCorkell	M.J. Romaniuk	P. Werthner
M. Bauer	P. Gibson	B. Maini	W. Rosehart	J. Winter
T. Beattie	P. Gimby	B. Mayer	R. Sanguinetti	B. Wylant
S. Benseler	S. Haq	E. Montes Garces	N. Schmidt	R. Yates
J. Bergerson	M. Herring	G. Nelson	T. Shandro	M. Zhang
C. Bousman	D. Hodgins	L. Nowell	R. Sigurdson	M. Zytaruk
J. Brown	C. Hogan	M. O'Brien	D. Sinasac	
M. Cassis	I. Holloway	D. Paskevich	D. Slater	
O. Chapman	C. Hurrell	R. Pereyra	F. Smith	
R. Clements	F. Jalilehvand	E. Perrault	D. Stewart	

Guests

D. Bruckner, Senior Director, Student Wellness - Access and Support – present for Item 10
J. Ruwanpura, Vice-Provost (International) – present for Item 11
F. Strzelczyk, Deputy Provost – present for Item 9
A. Szeto, Director, Mental Health Strategy – present for Item 10

Observers

J. Alho, Assoc. Vice-President (Government and Community Engagement)
K. Hamilton, President's Office
M. Hart, Vice-Provost (Indigenous Engagement)
K. Jackson, University General Counsel
C. Johns, Provost's Office
D. Kozak, Faculty Association
M. Kularatne, Students' Union
C. McVie, Provost's Office
A. Morris, Co-Interim Vice-President (Advancement)
M. Smith, Vice-Provost (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)
R. Thompson, Associate Vice-President (Research)

Secretary

S. Belcher

Scribe

E. Sjogren

Staff

J. Carter
T. Hodzic
C. Tutt

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:32 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:

- Amy Dambrowitz, Registrar, Nicole Schmidt, Students' Union (SU) President, Renzo Pereyra, SU Vice-President (Academic) and several of the SU student representatives were welcomed on this occasion of their first General Faculties Council (GFC) meeting
- Members of GFC were thanked for everything they're doing during this challenging time and encouraged to look after their health and mental health
- The University's April 22, 2021 Giving Day was the most successful one yet, with more than 2,200 individual donors giving \$1.6 million. The funds raised are used for things such as student bursaries and experiential learning.
- Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs is now being implemented. Growth Through Focus in parallel with Alberta 2030 will guide the University in the coming years, particularly in respect of future-focused program delivery and collective scholarship. Representatives of the University will continue to communicate with the Ministry of Advanced Education and other Ministries including Finance, Jobs, and Culture to position the University as a leader in the province's post-secondary system.
- Laurentian University filed for creditor protection in February 2021 and is currently restructuring and laying off some staff. Colleagues across Canada are reaching out to offer support, such as assisting students who have lost their program, and there has been a lot of talk about what went wrong at this institution. In regards to whether this could happen to the University, it was reported that Alberta has strict audit rules and the Board of Governors is thorough in its oversight responsibilities and the risk is considered unlikely.
- Nursing Week is May 10-16, 2021 and, in light of this, GFC members from the Faculty of Nursing and their colleagues were celebrated for their achievements

3. Remarks of the Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair included the following in her remarks:

- The University's 2021 Internationalization Achievement Awards have been announced and the office of the Vice-Provost (International) and UCalgary International are acknowledged for this important recognition program
- Malinda Smith, Vice-Provost (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion), has been appointed to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Governing Council and is the first appointee to the SSHRC Governing Council from the University
- A workshop was held on May 11, 2021 to discuss how to move forward with the fifth Growth Through Focus area of focus; social change and equity scholarship
- A townhall was held today for academic staff members regarding planning for the Fall 2021 semester. Health and safety is a top priority, and communication will be continuous as uncertainties are addressed.

4. Question Period

There were no questions.

5. Safety Moment

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Linda Dalgetty, Vice-President (Finance and Services), presented on the topic of the “Joint Worksite Health and Safety Committee”, specifically noting that this is a collaborative committee that provides oversight of safety on campus and that the committee can be contacted if members of the University community have issues of concern.

6. Inclusive Practice Moment

The Vice-Chair reported that this is a new standing item on GFC agendas, and read the following Acknowledgement:

We acknowledge the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations), as well as the Tsuut’ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda (including the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations). The City of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.

The Vice-Chair explained that the purpose of this new standing GFC agenda item is to allow for the highlighting of many examples of how the University is a welcoming, respectful and inclusive community. The Inclusive Practice Moment will have a different presenter each meeting, and will begin with a territory acknowledgement followed by a brief description of a practice or initiative related to being an inclusive campus. GFC members were invited to suggest persons to present.

7. Approval of the April 8, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded
That the Minutes of the General Faculties Council meeting held on April 8, 2021 be approved. **Carried**

8. Growth Through Focus – Framework for Growth

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Ed McCauley, President and Vice-Chancellor, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponent provided an overview of the development of the Growth Through Focus (GTF) vision and the Framework for Growth (Framework), observing that the University has been impacted by budget cuts and an economic downturn and needs a plan for long term and sustainable growth

- The proponent specifically highlighted the three key elements of the Framework (transdisciplinary scholarship, community partnerships, and future-looking programming) and then described the five initial areas of focus (Health and Life, Energy Transformation, Cities and Communities, Digital Worlds, and Social Change and Equity) noting that concepts including equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), Indigenous engagement and reconciliation, academic freedom, entrepreneurial thinking, and anchor to society are woven throughout the Framework
- Discussion included:
 - All members of the University community can embrace priorities such as quality education and EDI
 - The statement in point 13 of the Framework that “transdisciplinary excellence is built upon disciplinary excellence” is appreciated, because all scholarship should be embraced
 - Point 14 of the Framework states that the areas of focus will be driven by faculty who have “opted to participate”. Some scholars may still find it difficult to fit with one of the five areas of focus, and the extreme suggestion that scholars will opt into or out of the Framework is a concern. The proponent observed that the areas of focus are broad, and it is expected that all scholars will be able to identify a connection.
 - The University has many thriving transdisciplinary initiatives already underway
 - The fifth area of focus, Social Change and Equity, is not meant to be a catch-all non-STEM area of focus, as the other four areas of focus are diverse and also include non-STEM scholars. It was emphasised that the Framework is not intended to put scholars into silos.
 - GTF consultation has been broad, but the Postdoctoral Association would also like to be included as a consultation group
- It was suggested that:
 - Clarity is needed regarding what increasing the “amount” of working with the community on future-focused program delivery means
 - Points 10 and 11 of the Framework could be combined, as the preamble to both is the same
 - The title of the fifth area of focus, Social Change and Equity, should be revised in order that the community at large can understand that EDI is a University-wide priority and embedded within all of the areas of focus and not just the fifth. It was further suggested that “Democracy” is a more inclusive category of scholarship than “Social Change” and there was consensus that this word is preferred.
 - The introduction to the Framework could establish that there are “opportunities” to connect to the areas of focus, which sets a positive tone
 - Specific GTF language relating to lifelong learning is not included in the future-focused program delivery section of the Framework and should be restored. Lifelong learning is important and also a priority in Alberta 2030.

9. Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Florentine Strzelczyk, Co-Chair of the Academic Staff Criteria and Processes (ASCP) Working Group, and Francine Smith, Co-Chair of the ASCP Working Group, presented this item.

Highlights

- The proponents provided an overview of the development of the Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook (Handbook) and reminded members that GFC approved part of the Handbook in November 2020. The proponents then highlighted the content of the Handbook, including definitions, position posting procedures, selection procedures for academic appointments (in and outside of Faculties), expedited procedures for spousal and strategic hiring, and equitable and inclusive hiring procedures.
- The proponents reported that, if the Handbook is approved in June, some reformatting will be done in order to eliminate any redundancy
- In response to a question, it was reported that there is a hiring committee for a strategic hire, and there will be a thorough process including consideration of a candidate's supervision record. It was suggested that this section 7.4 of the Handbook make more explicit that strategic hiring "will follow all normal hiring processes".

10. Campus Mental Health Strategy Progress Report

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Andrew Szeto, Director, Mental Health Strategy, and Debbie Bruckner, Senior Director, Student Wellness - Access and Support, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters provided an update on the implementation of the Campus Mental Health Strategy and described current initiatives including; the offering of trainings, workshops and the Certificate in Mental Wellbeing and Resilience, the development of online resources and the establishment of a greater social media presence, the expansion of internal and external partnerships, and the availability of wellness services and supports. The presenters noted that proactive treatment and crisis prevention messaging are current priorities, and reported that the University will be hosting an upcoming campus mental health conference.
- The presenters then reported on the implementation of a new "single session counselling" model, which has provided help to more than 7,000 students and has resulted in the elimination of the counselling waitlist
- The presenters noted that the Campus Mental Health Strategy will undergo a review later in 2021
- Discussion included that:
 - The Wellness Centre could experience high demand for services when the University returns to on-campus operations. The presenters noted that additional counsellors were hired this year, virtual counselling will continue to be offered, and a peer-support system is being established.
 - Support staff are also facing tremendous stresses at this time, due to the impacts of COVID-19 and budget-related layoffs. The presenters indicated that managers have been asked to engage in personalized communications with staff members and to exercise compassion and flexibility.
 - Participation in events, such as performances offered by the School of Creative and Performing Arts and classes offered by the Faculty of Kinesiology, can be cathartic and members of the University community are encouraged to access these

- Faculty members need training on how to appropriately respond to disclosures of sexual assault
- Comfort in talking about mental health has increased
- Some Faculties offer services that complement the Wellness Centre, such as the Cumming School of Medicine which has increased its psychiatry and racial trauma services
- The Chair acknowledged the presenters for their efforts and leadership during this difficult year

11. International Strategy Progress Report

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Janaka Ruwanpura, Vice-Provost (International), presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter provided an update on the implementation of the International Strategy, including progress toward the four goals of increasing diversity, improving cross-cultural competencies, enhancing international partnerships, and engaging in international development. The presenter reported that the International Strategy has now been replaced by the Global Engagement Plan.
- The presenter reported that next year's report on the implementation of the Global Engagement Plan will include reporting on some key performance indicators (KPIs) that are carrying forward from the International Strategy and some new KPIs
- Discussion included that:
 - The International Strategy set bold targets and allowed the University to create its own brand for international engagement that reflects the values of embracing diversity and increasing respect for cultures around the world
 - The biggest challenge to reporting against KPIs is collecting complete and inclusive data

12. Standing Reports

The following reports were circulated with the Agenda for information only:

- a) Report on the April 28, 2021 GFC Executive Committee Meeting
- b) Report on the May 3 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee Meeting
- c) Report on the April 20, 2021 Teaching and Learning Committee meeting
- d) Policy Development Update

13. Other Business

There was no other business.

14. Adjournment

The May 13, 2021 General Faculties Council meeting was adjourned by consensus.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

Susan Belcher
University Secretary