



GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL
Approved Minutes

Meeting #616
Thursday, June 16, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

By Zoom platform

Voting Members

E. McCauley, Chair	A. Burns	F. Jalilehvand	J. Poissant	M. Van Hee
B. Adams	O. Chapman	A. Jenney	J. Priest	A. Viczko
M. Akbari	P. Chopra	S. Jinnah	C. Proudfoot	R. Walker
O. Alp	R. Clements	D. Joshi	S. Raj	S. Weaver
J. Anderson	S. Davidson	R. Kim	L. Reid	R. Weller
C. Armstrong	A. dela Cruz	B. Klics	E. Rezaei	P. Werthner
D. Ashby	J. Dewald	S. LeBlanc	M.J. Romaniuk	J. Winter
J. Ayala	J. Dinh	M. McDonough	S. S. Saaka	R. Yates
K. Baetz	V. Fast	M. MacKenzie	A. Schmal	M. Zytaruk
S. Barker	J. Fewell	E. MacPhail	N. Schmidt	
M. Bauer	D. Fine	B. Maini	C. Seneviratne	
B. Beaty	M. Fraser	J. Meddings	R. Sigurdson	
J. Bergerson	D. Gereluk	L. Nowell	D. Sinasac	
C. Bousman	W. Ghali	A. Nygren for W. Rosehart	J. Steele	
W. Bridel	K. Hecker	E. Perrault	D. Stewart	
I. Brodie	C. Hurrell	Q. Pittman	T. Tombe	
J. Brown	M. Husein	T. Poffenroth	P. Toohey	

Guests

D. Book, Legal Counsel – present for Item 8
J. Edge, Senior Policy Analyst – present for Item 8
B. Evelyn, Vice-Provost (Planning and Resource Allocation) – present for Item 9
S. Larter, Associate Vice-President (Research-Innovation) – present for Item 12
H. MacIntyre, Manager - Postdoctoral Office and Int. Grants – present for Item 11
B. St-Amand, Director - Strategic Projects – present for Item 10
M. Suarez, Research Analyst – Strategic – present for Item 9
M. Takeuchi, Werklund School of Education – present for Item 2
J. Wilson, President and Chief Executive Officer, Innovate Calgary – present for Item 12

Observers

J. Alho, Associate Vice-President (Government Relations)
K. Hamilton, President's Office
M. Hart, Vice-Provost & Associate Vice-President Research (Indigenous Engagement)
C. Johns, Provost's Office
J. Lacasse, General Counsel
S. McKenzie, Faculty Association
J. Ruwanpura, Vice-Provost (International)
W. Therrien, President's Office
R. Thompson, Associate Vice-President Research

Secretary

L. Houle

Scribe

E. Sjogren

Staff

T. Hodzic
R. Kenny
H. Lywin
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. Inclusive Practice Moment

Miwa Takeuchi, Associate Professor, Werklund School of Education (WSE), presented a Territorial Acknowledgment and then described a WSE community-based transdisciplinary project that brings faculty, students and alumni together with local intergenerational refugees to explore food production and vulnerability.

3. Safety Moment

Mike Van Hee, Vice-President (Services), presented on the topics of:

- The Right to a Healthy and Safe Workplace: Employees have the rights to know about health and safety through workplace assessments and staff trainings, to participate in conversations about health and safety, and to follow formal procedures to refuse unsafe work
- Alertus App: Download of this app is encouraged as it is a method used to notify members of the University community of emergencies

4. Remarks of the Chair

The Chair included the following in his remarks:

- Susan Barker, Vice-Provost (Student Experience), Jon Meddings, Dean, Cumming School of Medicine, Richard Sigurdson, Dean, Faculty of Arts, Christie Hurrell, representative of the Libraries and Cultural Resources Academic Council, Lise Houle, Interim University Secretary, and several of the elected/appointed academic staff members of the General Faculties Council (GFC) were acknowledged on this occasion of their last GFC meeting
- A series of convocation ceremonies were held last week, culminating with the Indigenous celebration on Saturday. The events were held in person, and the atmosphere was joyful and very important to students and their guests.
- Quantum City, a joint University, provincial and private sector initiative, launched on June 10, 2022 with an announcement of \$23 million in provincial government funding that will be used and leveraged to enable the development of new talent, research, and work-integrated learning opportunities in the quantum science and technology area
- Representatives of the University are pressing representatives of the provincial government on the matter of salaries restraint, with the aim of having this lifted
- Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs is a provincial government initiative that establishes a 10-year strategy for post-secondary education in Alberta and requires all institutions to sign an Investment Management Agreement (IMA) that makes some funding contingent upon the meeting of set performance targets. Last year, 5% of the University's funding was at risk and this

year 15% of the University's funding is at risk. A University team is in negotiations with the Ministry of Advanced Education to establish the University's three targets and the performance tolerance bands. The deadline to sign the IMA is extended while these negotiations are taking place.

- The University's President and Vice-Chancellor is now a member of the Board of Calgary Economic Development and will advocate for the University and general post-secondary interests during this work
- During a recent trip to Ottawa, members of the University community presented to persons including the Minister of Health, Minister of Agriculture, and members of the Privy Council on the One Health initiative, prepositioning for the University's forthcoming application to the Canada First Research Excellence Fund program in this area and a related application for a Canada Excellence Research Chair in the area of Child Health.
- The University's President and Vice-Chancellor gave testimony before the federal parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Research regarding the need for support for early career researchers, top undergraduate and graduate students, increased funding for the Canada Research Chairs program, and expanded direct support for developing deeper research partnerships
- Members were thanked for their resilience during what has been another difficult year

5. Question Period

In response to questions, it was reported that:

- The University has taken the approach of frequently talking to representatives of the provincial government about what the University contributes to society and how funding the University will produce a return on investment. The University recently received \$61 million in funding for several targeted programs and is pursuing any funding opportunities that arise. The University is advocating for broader, untargeted funding.
- The Alberta government's post-secondaries IMA program was modelled on the program in Ontario. The Ontario government opted to postpone implementation of its IMA program due to the pandemic, but the Alberta government has opted to move ahead.
- When the University receives funding for targeted programs, there is internal work done to ensure that the funding is allocated to all Faculties involved in the delivery of the programs

6. Approval of the May 12, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. The Chair presented this item.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the General Faculties Council meeting held on May 12, 2022 be approved.

Carried

Jason Anderson and Saaka Sulemana Saaka abstained

7. Elections

- **Two Academic Staff Members of the GFC to the GFC Executive Committee**
- **Two Academic Staff Members to an Advisory Selection Committee for a Dean of the Haskayne School of Business**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. The Chair explained that, in order that it can be confirmed that only voting members of the GFC are participating, the elections will be conducted via an electronic form and a link to this will be sent by email immediately following the meeting. Members will have until 4:00 p.m. on Friday, June 17 to follow the link and submit their votes.

No nominations from the floor were received.

Secretary's Note: The following persons were elected:

GFC Executive Committee:

Olive Chapman, Werklund School of Education

Satish Raj, Cumming School of Medicine

Advisory Selection Committee for the Dean of the Haskayne School of Business:

Sarah Eaton, Werklund School of Education

Andrew Szeto, Faculty of Arts

8. Partisan Political Activities Policy

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Deborah Book, John Alho, and Jessica Edge presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents provided an overview of the proposed changes to the University's Partisan Political Activities Policy, which include revisions to reflect recent legislation changes. It was emphasised that the Policy does not preclude individuals engaging in political activities as individuals, but that it protects the non-partisan status of the University by preventing the use of University funds for the establishment of PACs and preventing the positing of candidate signs on University property.
- Discussion included:
 - The inclusion of "referendum or plebiscite question" in the expanded definition of Partisan Political Activity is a concern, as scholars are frequently asked to provide expert comment on these matters, and this is an important role of scholars in the community. It can be said that referenda and plebiscites are attempts by governments to move issues outside of partisan activity to let the public decide, and so the proponents are asked to reconsider listing these in the definition of partisan activity. The proponents reported that the Partisan Political Activities Policy does not prevent individuals from being engaged as subject matter experts.
 - The broader Elections Alberta definition of political organizations appears to mostly target unions. A union can be registered as a political advertiser under legislation.

- The proposed revisions to the Partisan Political Activities Policy make policy advocacy even more difficult. For example, because provincial policies are enacted by government, which is partisan by nature, if a person opposes a provincial policy they can be seen to be opposing the government that introduced it. The proponents were asked to consider exempting participation in policy development from this.
- “Political office” is referred to in the Partisan Political Activities Policy but is not defined in Section 3 (Definitions), and so the proponents were asked to consider adding this as the University has been challenged on this definition in the past. It was cautioned that a definition of political office must be carefully determined as this is a complex area and not limited to elected office.

9. Understanding the QS and THE University Ranking Systems

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Bill Ghali, Vice-President (Research), introduced this item and then Marcelo Suarez and Bruce Evelyn presented.

Highlights:

- The presenters reported that the University is not chasing positive rankings, but it is necessary for the University to report on its performance and to communicate its successes. The presenters then presented on the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) and Times Higher Education (THE) university ranking systems, including that:
 - The QS and THE ranking systems are renowned, and have been in place since 2004
 - The information used to determine the rankings is collected from a number of sources, including from the universities themselves, and the metrics that the QS and THE ranking systems rely upon are both objective and subjective in nature
 - The QS system uses the following metrics: academic reputation, citations per faculty, faculty/student ratio, employer reputation, international faculty ratio, and international student ratio. The weightings of these metrics differ by discipline, for example the Arts/Humanities weight academic reputation relatively more while the Sciences/Medicine weight research citations relatively more. Among the ranked institutions, the University is currently ranked #235 under the QS system. The University’s better scores are in faculty/student ratio and citations per faculty.
 - The THE system has the following pillars: citations, research, teaching, international outlook, and industry income. Among the ranked institutions, the University is currently ranked in the #201-250 category under the THE system. The University’s better scores are in citations and industry income.
- Discussion included:
 - Some other ranking systems rely on less subjective information
 - The use of University resources to participate in and respond to institutional rankings was questioned during this time of budget cuts. The presenters observed that a university’s reputation impacts things such as philanthropy, student application decisions, and new research collaborations and so participation in and attention to the rankings systems is considered necessary. It was also observed that the information that the Office of Institutional Analysis gathers for the ranking systems metrics is also used for other

purposes such as for applying to Canada First Research Excellence Fund (CFREF) and Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) competitions.

- In response to a question, it was reported that the QS and THE ranking systems track citations differently and so that is why the data appears different

10. Global Engagement Plan Progress Report

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

Highlights:

- The presenter provided an overview of progress made toward the three goals in the University's Global Engagement Plan (GEP), which launched in 2020:
 - The diversity of the University community has improved, including that the graduate/undergraduate international student population is now at 33%, more international academic staff members have been hired, and the countries of origin of the international students are now more varied and not primarily India and China
 - The pandemic impacted the University's international experience opportunities for students, especially the study abroad programs, but generally the University's intercultural capacity has improved such as through the development of exchange, research, and internship/work experience programs
 - The University has enhanced its global partnerships through growing international research revenue, agreements, and collaborative publications and by developing participation in delegations, events and missions
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - The provincial government has a strategy for internationalization and is introducing a new program around international student attraction and engagement
 - The key performance indicators of the GEP and the metrics of the QS and THE ranking systems are related but are different

11. VPR Catalyst Grants Program

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Rob Thompson, Associate Vice-President (Research), introduced this item and then Hector MacIntyre presented.

Highlights:

- The presenter noted that the Catalyst Grants program has replaced the University Research Grants Committee (URGC) program that was closed in December 2021, and reported that:
 - The Catalyst Grants program has four intakes per year, and the program's funding is intended to be leveraged for additional external funding
 - The Catalyst Grants program is not a seed program but supports mature early-stage research projects. New research, new approaches to research, and the development of an existing research program are eligible for funding.

- The Catalyst Grants budget model normally provides up to \$15,000 but higher requests will be considered
- The presenter then highlighted statistics relating to the Catalyst Grants program, including funding requested versus funding awarded, number of applications received versus number of projects funded, funding by area (health, science/engineering, and social sciences/humanities), and funding by Faculty
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - It is difficult to compare at this time the funding provided by the Catalyst Grants and URGC grants by discipline area because the budget envelopes for these programs are different and because the URGC program was wound down while the Catalyst Grants program was being launched
 - A component of the Catalyst Grants application allows an applicant to express an equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) statement, but EDI disclosure is not required

12. Innovation Ecosystem Update

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Rob Thompson introduced this item and then Stephen Larter and John Wilson presented.

Highlights:

- The presenters reported that innovation activities at the University are supported by units including Innovate Calgary, the Hunter Hub, the Vice-President (Research) office, and the Faculties, and then highlighted:
 - Specific initiatives, which include the Now Innovating podcast, the Navigate to Innovate interactive directory of programs and services, the Academic Entrepreneurs in Residence support program, the Evolve2Innovate education and support program, and the UCeed funding program
 - Statistics relating to invention disclosures, licenses, patents, and startup companies
- The presenters reported that, compared to other institutions and when normalized for size, the University has a robust and successful innovation enterprise
- There were no questions or comments

13. Student Experience Report

Susan Barker presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter indicated that this year's Student Experience report is focused on accessibility, and reported that:
 - The University community is enriched by enabling access to education by diverse students
 - High admission averages are a noticeable barrier to some students who could make positive contributions to the University and achieve academic and career success. An alternative pathway to admission is the Diverse Qualifications Process, which supports

applicants who have achieved excellence outside academics or who have overcome significant hardships, and some Faculties have their own alternative admission processes.

- The University is making progress in establishing equitable Indigenous student admissions processes, and currently has Indigenous pathway programs in Engineering, Arts and Science; the Indigenous Student Access Program to support Indigenous students, including through the Writing Symbols Lodge; waiving of the University application fee; and focused Indigenous student recruitment efforts
 - Student Accessibility Services is the office that works with students with disabilities. Accommodations can be long-term, such as for ADHD, mental health conditions, and medical conditions, or short-term, such as for broken limbs. A key challenge to accommodations is balancing the needs of students with institutional needs.
 - Barriers to student retention include financial issues. Efforts are being made to increase access to financial aid, such as through the establishment of needs-based bursaries and emergency/crisis bursaries.
 - Other initiatives to advance accessibility include the recent Student Equity Survey which will give understanding of student diversity and identify gaps in access; a new program to support food security; improving the University's website content relating to accessibility; conducting audits of the language used in University materials; and developing supports for neurodiverse students
- Members of GFC expressed appreciation for how much is done in support of students
 - There were no questions

14. Report on the 2022 GFC Evaluation Session and Survey

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. The Chair and Interim University Secretary presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters reminded the members that the 2022 GFC evaluation session was held following the April 7, 2022 GFC meeting and an electronic survey was available for one week after, and then provided an overview of the actions planned in response to the feedback received, including that the Orientation session will be refreshed and the 2022-2023 meeting format will be determined after considering a number of factors
- There were no questions or comments

15. Standing Reports

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda as 'In Package Only' for information:

- a) Report on the May 25, 2022 GFC Executive Committee Meeting
- b) Report on the May 2 and May 16, 2022 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee Meetings
- c) Report on the May 17, 2022 Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting
- d) Report on the May 19, 2022 Research and Scholarship Committee Meeting
- e) Report on the May 27, 2022 Board of Governors Meeting
- f) Report on the May 5, 2022 Senate Meeting

16. Other Business

There was no other business.

17. Adjournment

Moved/Seconded

That the General Faculties Council adjourn the June 16, 2022 meeting.

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 3:36 p.m.

Lise Houle
Interim University Secretary