

GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL
Approved Minutes

Thursday, April 3, 2025, 1:30 p.m.
Meeting #636

In-Person Modality
Biological Sciences 587

Voting Members

E. McCauley, Chair	J. Dinh	T. Lucas	M.-J. Romaniuk
B. Adams for T. Anderson	S. Eaton	K. Lukowiak	F. F. Samavati
O. Adegbayike	J. Fewell	R. Martinuzzi	A. Sen
A. Affonso	K. Fitzpatrick	M. Mohamad	A. Shah
G. Assefa	A. Franceschet	A. Morris	R. Sheldon
J. Ayala	V. Gabriel	A. Musgrove	M. Sly for T. Poffenroth
A. Badescu	L. Gerein	L. Ndovi	F. Smith
K. Baetz	G. Grandy	L. Nowell for C. Laing	C. Tepperman
T. Beattie	D. Hapton	A. Nygren	R. Thompson for W.
M. Beg	C. Heggerud	K. O'Keefe	Ghali
W. Benoit	P. Hinman for J. Lacasse	T. O'Neill	E. Tom
M.-A. Bergeron	N. Holt	O. Osiyevskyy	E. Trinidad
Y. Boga for S. LeBlanc	A.-M. Hubert	H. Osthoff	V. Turpin
A. Burns	J. Jackson	E. Perrault	M. Van Hee
O. Chapman	J. Jenkins	G. Petrie	W. D. Walls
F. Clement	V. Jones	R. Plume	R. Weller
C. Cloutier	A. Karimi	J. Poissant	C. Willness
T. Comrie	J. Keller	A. Poppendorf	R. Yates for S. Davidson
A. Dambrowitz	R. Kim	J. Priest	
	J. Lock	S. Raj	

Guests

R. Arseneault, Teaching and Learning Project Coordinator – present for Item 7
K. Benzie, Faculty of Nursing and Director, Social Innovation – present for Item 9
K. Milaney, Associate Vice-President Research – present for Item 9
J. Stein, Senior Director, Risk Management and Insurance – present for Item 3
J. Wheeler, Libraries and Cultural Resources and Academic Co-Chair, Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook Working Group – present for Item 8

Observers

S. Alexander, Board of Governors member nominated by General Faculties Council
J. Amengor, incoming Graduate Students' Association Vice-President (Academic)
N. Bakana, incoming Students' Union President
S. Day, Senior Manager, Risk Management and Insurance
K. Hamilton, President's Office
D. Indurjeet, incoming Graduate Students' Association Vice-President (Student Life)
C. Johns, Associate Deputy Provost
S. Luthy, Provost's Office
S. McKenzie, Faculty Association
M. Rzaian, incoming Students' Union Faculty representative

Secretary

C. McVie

Scribe

E. Sjogren

Staff

V. Kozielec
M. Speta

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m., confirmed quorum, and welcomed members to the new General Faculties Council (GFC) meeting space.

1. Conflict of Interest Declaration

No conflicts were declared.

2. Inclusive Practice Moment

Renate Weller, Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, presented the Traditional Land Acknowledgment and then shared:

- An October 21, 2020 Time magazine article spotlighted that people of all races have pets but Veterinary Medicine in the western world is an overwhelmingly white profession. Veterinarians are most commonly upper middle-class, white, females. The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine is working to address this, in part through modifying the admission process and through outreach efforts. The recruitment of Black students is a current priority.
- From Fall 2020 to Fall 2024, the Indigenous student population in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine has grown from 0.7% undergraduate and 0 graduate students to 7.5% undergraduate and 1.2% graduate students. In 2023 the Faculty was given the Blackfoot name *Sokinaksinii*, which means 'place of healing', by Elder Clarence Wolfleg in recognition of the efforts of the Faculty's Indigenous Strategy implementation committees.

3. Safety Moment

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Janet Stein, Senior Director, Risk Management and Insurance, presented on the topic of international travel safety:

- Members of the University community are encouraged to:
 - Register their work or study-related travel with the Risk Management office and with the Government of Canada, so that assistance can be triggered if needed. Examples of work-related travel include conferences and meetings, fieldwork, guest lecturing and speaking, research trips, and meetings and collaborations with colleagues.
 - Ensure their travel documents are complete and always kept accessible. It is important to be able to demonstrate who you are, why you are travelling, and when you will return. A passport must be valid for six months after the planned return.
 - Comply with all requests from border agents.
 - Understand their travel and medical insurance coverage and have contact phone numbers handy.
- The Research Security office and partner International SOS can give briefings to members of the University community before travel. International SOS has a 24-hour emergency response phone number (1-215-354-5000) and an app. Global Affairs Canada (1-613-996-8885) and Campus Security (1-403-220-5333) can also be called.
- It should be expected that devices will be looked at. The University has a Loaner Device Program for employees and graduate students so that personal devices do not have to be taken when travelling on University business.

4. Remarks of the Chair

Ed McCauley, Chair, included the following in his remarks:

- This is the last GFC meeting for several student members, and they are thanked for their engagement. New student members present at the meeting as part of their onboarding are welcomed.
- It has been announced that Anders Nygren will be the Dean of the Schulich School of Engineering and Catherine Laing will be the Dean of the Faculty of Nursing, effective July 1, 2025.
- Recent events include a One Health conference, the Jarislowsky 2025 Dinner and Discussion, Dinos participation in the National Men's Basketball Championship, the Tea Dance Ceremony and *ii taa'poh'to'p* (Indigenous Strategy) update, the opening of the Q-Hub in Quantum City, and a memorial for former Board of Governors Chair Geeta Sankappanavar.
- The UCalgary Giving Day campaign runs until April 16, 2025, and has raised \$1.4 million so far. Members of the University community are thanked for their contributions to this.
- The bargaining with the Graduate Students' Association has completed, with 93% of the voting graduate students supporting the resulting Collective Agreement.
- The last day of classes will be April 11, 2025. The safety of students and the community is a high priority, and participation in the UCalgary Strong Festival on this day is encouraged.
- Regarding the implementation of the Provincial Priorities Act, 2024 (formerly Bill 18), it has been determined that the majority of the University's agreements will be exempted from the Act, including for federal Tri-Council research funding, which is pleasing news. Representatives of the University continue to work with the provincial government to ensure common interpretation.
- University researchers have just been awarded \$64 million in federal research funding, including Tri-Council grants and Canada Research Chairs. Scholars and supporting staff are thanked for their efforts to pursue this funding.

5. Question Period

In response to a question, it was reported that representatives of the University regularly communicate with the provincial government about matters important to the University, including unimpeded research funding and academic freedom. There are four primary categories of exemption from the Provincial Priorities Act, 2024 (federal funding agreements under \$100,000; agreements primarily for research; agreements supporting programming; and fee-for-service contracts, short-term leases, and rental agreements) and so there is broad opportunity to maintain freedom.

6. Approval of the March 6, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the General Faculties Council meeting held on March 6, 2025 be approved.

Carried

7. Approval of the UCalgary Course Experience Survey (UCES) Operating Standard and Revisions to the Teaching and Learning Committee Terms of Reference

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Wendy Benoit, Interim Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning), and Robin Arseneault, Teaching and Learning Project Coordinator, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents explained that a next step in the rollout of the UCalgary Course Experience Survey (UCES) is to have an operating standard. The 2022 Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) Recommendation Report emphasised the need to support students and instructors in using the course survey, and the guidelines for the previous institutional course survey, the USRI, date to 1998 and need updating. The proponents reported that the proposed UCES Operating Standard does not introduce significant change to administrative processes but incorporates changes such as reference to the new course survey platform, Explorance Blue.
- The proponents reported that it has been determined that the responsibility to regularly review the UCES Operating Standard should rest with GFC's Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) as the members have expertise in this area, and so this is being proposed to the GFC.
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - GFC approved the new UCES institutional course survey questions in 2024, and it is only the UCES Operating Standard and the delegation to the TLC being approved today.
 - Survey results are not shared with an instructor until after the course is over.
 - There are not resources to review every comment submitted by students, so inappropriate comments may be read by an instructor. The University provides supports for instructors and an instructor can report any issues with course survey results to their Dean's office. In particularly egregious circumstances, Legal Services has determined that it is possible to go beyond the deidentification of responses and connect a comment to a particular student and pursue the matter under the University's Code of Conduct.
 - All relevant University policies, including the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy and the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy, will be considered if an issue arises.
 - Faculty leaders should be informing all instructors, including sessional instructors, of resources and avenues for assistance relating to course surveys. Going forward, communications to Faculty leaders will specifically mention supporting sessional instructors.
- It was suggested that section 3.12 be revised to refer to a Likert-like scale, and the proponents agreed to this revision.

Moved/Seconded

That the General Faculties Council:

- 1) approve the UCalgary Course Experience Survey (UCES) Operating Standard, and
- 2) revise the Terms of Reference of the Teaching and Learning Committee to delegate the responsibility to review and approve revisions to the UCES Operating Standard, effective immediately

as set out in the documents provided, and as recommended by the Teaching and Learning Committee, and with the requested amendment.

Carried

Secretary's note: The Chair left the meeting at this point, and Robin Yates, designate of the Vice-Chair, chaired the remainder of the meeting.

8. Revisions to the General Faculties Council Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Robin Yates, Deputy Provost and Administrative Co-Chair of the Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook Working Group (ASCPHWG), and Justine Wheeler, Libraries and Cultural Resources and Academic Co-Chair of the ASCPHWG, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents reported that the GFC Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook (the Handbook) underwent minor revisions this year, primarily focused on section C.3 (Selection Procedures for Continuing Academic Appointments), and indicated that more revisions are anticipated for next year after the new Collective Agreement between the Faculty Association and the Board of Governors is in place.
- In response to a question and follow up discussion, it was indicated that teaching workload, including in cross-Faculty and transdisciplinary courses, is determined by Faculty guidelines and discussion with a Department Head. The proponents indicated that the Handbook will include more content relating to transdisciplinary work after next year's ASCPHWG work.
- In response to a question, it was reported that teaching release is addressed in the Collective Agreement not the Handbook.
- It was stated that it is expected that this item will return to the GFC at the May 8 meeting for approval.

9. Social Innovation Initiative Update

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Karen Benzies, Faculty of Nursing and Director, Social Innovation, introduced by Katrina Milaney, Associate Vice-President Research, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter presented on the University's Social Innovation Initiative, including that:
 - The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by all UN member states in 2015, and a Sustainable Development Goals global network has resulted in strong partnerships and dedicated policies relating to Social Innovation.
 - The Canadian government has invested \$750 million in the Social Innovation and Social Finance Strategy to advance growth in this area.
 - The province of Quebec is the only province that reports data relating to social enterprise, such as the number of initiatives, employment in social enterprise, and impact on gross domestic product (GDP).
 - There are four major actors in the Social Innovation ecosystem: government, society, business, and academia. Traditionally, there have been barriers to meaningful and sustained partnerships across these groups, but Social Innovation is enabling collaborative actions.
 - Current activities under the University's Social Innovation Initiative include: conducting systematic reviews of social impact measurement, working with the Translating Research to

Action (TR2A) coaches, developing the Social Innovation specialization in the Graduate Certificates in Transdisciplinary Studies I & II which will launch in September 2025, preparing to host the International Social Innovation Research Conference in September 2025, and developing a Vision for Social Innovation at UCalgary.

- In response to questions, the presenter stated that:
 - Social Innovation is an umbrella topic, including areas such as social enterprise, corporate social responsibility, and sustainability, and many researchers may see themselves in this space. The Social Innovation team can help identify connections to Social Innovation and help link researchers with others.
 - Community engagement can be reverse engineered, such as when a community organisation (e.g.; the Calgary Urban Project Society (CUPS)) brings a challenge to the University and the Social Innovation team connects the organisation to people with expertise and relationships relating to this.

10. Approved Revisions to the 2025-2026 GFC and GFC Standing Committees Meeting Schedule and the 2026-2027 Meeting Schedule

The approved 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 GFC and GFC standing committees meeting schedules were circulated with the Agenda as 'In Package Only' for information.

11. Standing Reports

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

- a) Report on the March 12, 2025 GFC Executive Committee Meeting
- b) Report on the February 24 and March 10, 2025 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee Meetings
- c) Report on the March 11, 2025 Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting
- d) Report on the March 21, 2025 Board of Governors Meeting
- e) Report on the February 27, 2025 Senate Meeting

12. Other Business

There was no other business.

13. Adjournment

Moved/Seconded

That the General Faculties Council adjourn the April 3, 2025 meeting.

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 2:38 p.m.

Time was provided for members to complete and submit the 2025 GFC Member Survey. A QR code was projected, and an email with a link to the survey was sent. It was announced that the survey link will

remain live until April 30, 2025 and that the results of the survey will be reported to GFC members at the June meeting.

Courtney McVie
University Secretary