

GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL

Approved Minutes

Thursday, June 12, 2025, 1:30 p.m.
Meeting #638

In-Person Modality
Biological Sciences 587

Voting Members

E. McCauley, Chair
S. Davidson, Vice-Chair
O. Adegbayike
J. Amengor
F. Aryan
G. Assefa
N. Bakana
B. Barton
W. Benoit
O. Chapman
C. Cunningham for T. Beattie
A. Dambrowitz
G. Dziegielewska
P. Easton
K. Fitzpatrick
A. Franceschet
V. Gabriel
J. Gebert
L. Gerein
W. Ghali
K. Hamilton

D. Hapton
S. Hershcovis for G. Grandy
M. Hua
C. Hurrell for M.-J. Romaniuk
D. Indurjeet
J. Jackson
V. Jones
A. Karimi
J. Lacasse
C. Laing
B. Leadbetter for V. Turpin
J. Lock
T. Lucas
K. Lukowiak
A. Mac Namara
J. MacCallum for K. Baetz
A. Morris
A. Musgrove
H. Naveed
K. O'Keefe
T. O'Neill
O. Osiyevskyy

H. Osthoff
A. Panech
J. Perna
E. Perrault
R. Plume
T. Poffenroth
J. Poissant
S. Raj
S. Russell-Mayhew for A. Burns
M. Rzaian
F. F. Samavati
C. Sears for K. Donlevy
R. Sheldon
M. Singh for A. Nygren
N. Srivalsan
G. Stewart
T. Strelow
W. D. Walls
R. Weller
R. Wensveen
J. Winter
S. Yee

Guests

J. Abel, Research Data Management Librarian, Technology Services – present for Item 12
I. Gates, Associate Vice President (Research and Innovation) – present for Item 11
T. Lier, Director, Grants, Awards and Ethics, Research Services – present for Items 12 and 13
S. McGinnis, Senior Director, Communications Services – present for Item 9
E. O'Toole, Specialist, EDI in Research, Research Services Office – present for Item 13
C. Reynolds, Graduate Student Intern, Research Services Office – present for Item 12
M. Tahir, Research Awards and Chairs Specialist, Office of the Vice President (Research) – present for Item 13
A. Thistlewood, Research Data Management Specialist, Research Services Office – present for Item 12
R. Thompson, Associate Vice-President Research – present for Items 12 and 13

Observers

S. Alexander, Board of Governors member nominated by General Faculties Council
M. Hart, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President Research (Indigenous Engagement)
C. Johns, Associate Deputy Provost
S. Luthy, Provost's Office
R. Yates, Deputy Provost

Secretary

C. McVie

Scribe

E. Sjogren

Staff

V. Kozielec
M. Speta

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

Catherine Laing, Dean of the Faculty of Nursing, presented the Traditional Land Acknowledgment and then shared about a new art piece that was unveiled on May 15, 2025 on the second floor of the Professional Faculties Building. The painting represents the four Indigenous elements (fire, air, earth, water), and is important to the Faculty because Indigenous ways are being woven into the Faculty's courses as the Faculty shares the belief that all aspects of life are interconnected and people are its stewards.

3. Safety Moment

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Shelley Alexander, Faculty of Arts, presented the Safety Moment on the topic of wildlife safety, including:

- There are a variety of wildlife species on the University's campuses, including coyotes, deer, and geese. While rare, there are inherent risks of incidents.
- Conflict prevention and stewardship are priorities of the University. A team including wildlife experts, Facilities, Grounds, and Campus Security work together to monitor wildlife behaviour and cultivate an informed culture of practice for wildlife on campus.
- Best practices include not feeding any wildlife, removing all attractants, keeping dogs on leashes, and removing oneself from an encounter or making noise (such as waving a plastic bag or shaking an umbrella) to send the wildlife away.
- The [Living with Wildlife website](#) provides information about co-existing with wildlife and links for reporting issues. Any sightings of coyotes or attractants should be reported to the University.

Discussion included that jackrabbits are another animal frequently seen on the University's campuses, and they should also be avoided as they can carry disease.

4. Remarks of the Chair

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

- Amy Burns, Acting Dean, Werklund School of Education, Evaristus Oshionebo, Interim Dean, Faculty of Law, and several of the academic staff member Faculty representatives were acknowledged on this occasion of their last General Faculties Council (GFC) meeting. Jake Gebert, Interim Vice-President (Finance) and CFO and Interim Vice-President (Services and Operations), and Kate Hamilton, Vice-President (External Relations), were welcomed as new members of the GFC.
- It has been announced that the University is now an XPRIZE hub, the first outside the organization's main office, and this is a testament to the University's entrepreneurial spirit. The XPRIZE organization aims to drive change through the enablement of collaborations by innovators.

- The final convocation ceremony for the University of Calgary in Qatar (UCQ) was held May 11, 2025. The University's endeavours at UCQ successfully buoyed the Nursing profession in the Middle East, and the impact is set to endure through the continued contributions of its highly skilled alumni to the health and well-being of people in Qatar and beyond.
- A Tea Dance ceremony, affirming the University's commitment to *ii' taa'poh'to'p* (the Indigenous Strategy) and validating its 2024 annual report, was hosted by the Office of Indigenous Engagement on May 15, 2025. The Tea Dance was led by Karli and Amelia Crowshoe, and the event also included pipe and smudge ceremonies.
- The Hunter Hub participated in the Web Summit 2025 tech conference from May 27-30, 2025. The exhibits and demos showcased the University's entrepreneurial endeavours and innovation ecosystem, including highlighting ten startup companies.
- The provincial government has announced increased funding for the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine's Diagnostic Services Unit, and the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation, Hon. RJ Sigurdson, toured the facility on May 26, 2025. The University plays a central role in disease diagnoses and the increased funding will allow for expanded testing capability.
- The University granted two Honorary Degrees (to Patrick Carlson and Carlene Donnelly) and four Order of the University of Calgary awards (to Esmail Bharwani, Wayne Harris, Wayne Thomas, and Marcello Tonelli) during the Spring 2025 convocation ceremonies, and the President's Award for Excellence in Leadership was awarded to four students (Seleem Badawy, Biomedical Engineering, Luis Armando Sanchez Diaz, Political Science, Thomas Tri, Social Work, and Kate Wong, Nursing). Eleven convocation ceremonies were held this year, with 6,989 students graduating. Members of the University community who attended the ceremonies and who volunteered their time in support of the ceremonies were thanked for their involvement.
- The Indigenous graduation celebration and gifting ceremony and the following tea dance were held June 11, 2025. The festivities were attended by graduates and their families, elders, and members of the community.
- The University's School of Public Policy and the G7 Research Group are hosting a conference entitled Plans, Prospects and Possibilities for the G7 2025 Kananaskis Summit on June 11-12, 2025. The conference brings together leaders from around the world (including the Right Honourable Jean Chrétien, former Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, former Prime Minister of Canada, the Honourable John Manley, former Deputy Prime Minister of Canada, the Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta, and the Honourable Myles McDougall, Alberta Minister of Advanced Education) for a series of roundtable discussions in advance of the G7 Summit.

5. Remarks of the Vice-Chair

Sandra Davidson, Vice-Chair, included the following in her remarks:

- The Continuing Education graduation ceremony was held on June 11, 2025, with 1,130 students graduating with micro-credentials, certificates, or diplomas.
- The University hosted Together|Ensemble 2025, the United Nations sustainable development goals international conference, from May 26-27, 2025. There were 503 attendees in-person and online, and Indigenous ways were incorporated into the event.

6. Question Period

There were no questions.

7. Approval of the May 8, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Ed McCauley, Chair, presented this item. One amendment to the attendance section of the Minutes was reported.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the General Faculties Council meeting held on May 8, 2025 be approved, with the reported amendment.

Carried

8. Elections

- **Two Academic Staff Members of GFC to the GFC Executive Committee**
- **Two Academic Staff Members to the Advisory Review Committee for the Dean of the Faculty of Science**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. The Chair explained that 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 13 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

Oleksiy Osiyevskyy, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Advisory Review Committee for the Dean of the Faculty of Science

Artem Korobenko, Schulich School of Engineering

Brent Else, Faculty of Arts

9. Position on Statements

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Ed McCauley, President and Vice-Chancellor, Sandra Davidson, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and Sarah McGinnis, Senior Director, Communications Services, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents explained that the Position on Statements:
 - Serves to formalize and provide guidance regarding when statements about matters, such as current events and social issues, can be issued.
 - Builds upon the University's 2019 Statement on Free Expression.

- Will apply to all units, including Faculty Councils and Departments.
- The proponents remarked that institutional statements can diminish individual statements, and so it is important to have parameters about when institutional statements can be made and when the institution should remain neutral.
- The proponents reviewed the governance routing for the approval of the Position on Statements, and indicated that feedback received to date has been considered. The proponents reported that the drafting committee determined that any University response to media requests for comment relating to events and issues should be limited to how this impacts the University's operations, and that examples have been added to the document. The proponents also reported that language has been edited to make clear what is meant by the University's 'operations'.
- Discussion included that:
 - A department can be a community in addition to being a University unit, and it is possible that a department may want to issue a collective statement about a matter but this is not permitted under the Position on Statements. It was suggested that Departments be removed from the list of University units that are limited in their ability to issue statements. The proponents indicated that they would contemplate this different perspective but in this context the Position on Statements refers to the Department as a University unit and that individuals can make statements, but not as a unit of the University.
 - The media or others may interpret opinions expressed during a Department meeting as being a Department's position on a matter. The aim is to protect free speech while clarifying that statements on behalf of the University are limited to the bounds of the Position on Statements.
 - There may be uncertainty within units about what matters can be addressed through a formal statement. The proponents explained that a matter that has gone through the University's governance structure is considered part of the University's core business and therefore can have a statement made about it.
 - Other institutions appear to encourage non-performative statements on matters, and so the University's move to limit this was questioned. The proponents noted that, as included in the materials, several universities are moving towards practices of institutional neutrality.
 - There is a risk that a unit issuing a statement about a matter may be interpreted as implying that this matter is more important than others.
 - Some components of this need to be clearly defined, such as what constitutes 'contentious issues', what is meant by 'statement', whether words spoken during an interview are a statement, and who is considered to be a representative of the University. The proponents indicated that an FAQ and additional information will be added to the Freedom of Expression website, and language will be defined and clarified on the website.
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - Care must be taken because issuing a statement can be seen to be silencing other opinions. The University values informed discussion and debate, and it is not desired to prevent that.
 - The Board of Governors refers to the University's leadership as 'Management' and that is why this language is in the Position on Statements.

10. Annual Update on Progress Achieved Towards Implementation of the *Ahead of Tomorrow* Strategic Plan (Teaching & Learning and Research & Innovation)

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Ed McCauley, President and Vice-Chancellor, Sandra Davidson, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and Bill Ghali, Vice-President (Research), presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters described that reporting to the GFC about the *Ahead of Tomorrow* strategic plan happens twice per year: the dashboard will be brought to the GFC in the Fall, and an update on progress toward these targets is presented to the GFC in June. The presenters then reported on the progress within the Teaching and Learning and Research and Innovation pillars this year, including:
 - Teaching and Learning:
 - The First-Generation Scholars Program successfully launched, with 220 students engaging in programming and 90% of participants expressing a sense of connection to the University.
 - The University is preparing for growth through a Space Utilization Study. Capacity will be built as the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape moves to a downtown location in the coming months. A course-scheduling software project is underway and this will result in efficiencies.
 - Wrap-around student services are being enhanced, including providing affordable food, the availability of same day mental health appointments, and the hiring of increased staff in Student Accessibility Services.
 - Student engagement metrics have been identified and defined, in the domains of transformative teaching and learning, holistic advising and inclusive supports, supervision and mentorship, signature learning experiences, and community belonging and social connections. U15 comparator metrics include data from the National Survey of Student Engagement, Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey, and Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey. The development of a Student Engagement Dashboard has been initiated.
 - The Office of Signature Learning Experiences is launching, entrepreneurial thinking micro-credentials are being developed, and foundational course mapping of entrepreneurial thinking and research and creative scholarship opportunities for students is underway.
 - Progress is being made toward the goal of increasing total enrolment by 10,000 students by 2030 and toward the Alberta Investment Management Agreement domestic enrolment target. Twelve programs have undergone expansion so far. The University is working with Deans to develop a strategic enrolment model to meet student demand for programs and meet employer needs.
 - Research and Innovation:
 - There has been strong growth in applications for Tri-Council funding by University researchers, and progress is being made toward the objective of increasing the research revenue per scholar. Applications to non-traditional funding sources are also being encouraged.
 - The University's total external research revenue has steadily grown since 2020-2021, to \$588.5 million at last reporting in 2023-2024. It is hoped to reach \$600 million this year and \$750 million a year by 2030.
 - In addition to growth in Tri-Council funding, particularly Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) funding, the University has seen the largest increases in Canada Research Chair (CRC) and Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) funding among the U15.

- The One Child Every Child Canada First Research Excellence Fund (CFREF) initiative received the largest grant in Alberta post-secondary history, of \$125 million.
- The University recently welcomed two Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) holders and has been awarded an envelope for new CERCs.
- Growing partnerships and community engagement are priorities, and the University's Industry Engagement Team is now working at full capacity.
- The Research and Innovation Plan highlights the importance of improving processes for researchers and so recent changes, including to Research Legal Services, have been made.
- Discussion included:
 - Growing the student population by 10,000 could negatively impact student engagement, such as if students feel unseen. The presenters observed that the Student Engagement Dashboard will enable any decreases in student satisfaction to be noticed.
 - There is concern that changes to the graduate student funding model may reduce the number of graduate students that can be supported. It was reported that there is sufficient budget funding to meet the minimum standard and there should be no collapse of any existing programs. The presenters also observed that there are a number of avenues for graduate student funding, including the funding for trainees within research grants and a variety of scholarships.
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - It is expected that the Student Engagement Dashboard will allow for the demonstration of improved student engagement by showing improvement of measures over time. The measures will include responses to questions from student engagement surveys that will resonate for the University community.
 - There is a need for more student residence spaces, and the University is working to grow housing options. Space issues can also be addressed through developing alternative program delivery modes, such as offering courses remotely.
 - The goal of increasing total enrolment by 10,000 students by 2030 was established before the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) changes impacted international student enrolment. The University's strategy has changed, and effort can be made to creatively grow provincial and national enrolment.
 - The growth in student enrolment will be across the whole system, including undergraduate and graduate programs.
 - It is expected that the University's priorities of delivering program excellence, promoting critical thinking, and involving students in research and scholarship (i.e. through the Program for Undergraduate Research Experience (PURE) awards) will be reflected in student survey results as students will indicate that they are receiving creative and high value education.

11. Innovation Ecosystem Update

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Ian Gates, Associate Vice-President (Research and Innovation), presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter remarked that the innovation ecosystem is a critical part of implementing the *Ahead of Tomorrow* strategic plan, tying to the priorities of delivering future-focused education, harnessing

research to tackle challenges, and connecting with community, and then gave a presentation including:

- The path toward innovation starts with an idea or challenge, then involves the execution of a usually collaborative research project, and results in outcomes including scholarship, publications, and presentations, solutions and processes, the development of talent and trainees, and community benefit. At the core of innovation is having impact. Some innovative research results in the trade secret intellectual property, startup companies, and commercialization.
- Examples of innovation and entrepreneurship activities across the University were highlighted.
- Internal and external units and programs that support innovative work at the University include the Hunter Hub, the Social Innovation Initiative, Innovate Calgary, the UCeed granting program, Alberta Innovates, the Creative Destruction Lab - Rockies, the Industrial Research Assistance Program (IRAP), the Academic Entrepreneur in Residence (AEiR) program, the XPRIZE Canadian Hub, and the Faculties. It is known that this is a complex system, and effort is being made to make it easier for researchers and students to be aware of and to access supports.
- An inventory of innovation-related activities and expertise at the University, including a list of innovation/entrepreneurial thinking undergraduate and graduate courses, is nearly complete and this will be used to examine strengths and gaps. Areas where there are duplications of efforts will be identified, and opportunities for efficiencies will be considered.
- Discussion included:
 - Having multiple avenues to seek help, such as Innovate Calgary and the Hunter Hub, is good for researchers, especially if a support unit does not have the capacity to be quickly responsive. The presenter acknowledged that response time is a concern and this is being examined.
 - The Calgary Urban Project Society (CUPS) programs are an example of innovative collaborative work that benefits society.

12. Research Data Management Update

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Robert Thompson, Associate Vice-President Research, Alexander Thistlewood, Research Data Management Specialist, Research Services Office, Tiago Lier, Director, Grants, Awards and Ethics, Research Services, and Jennifer Abel, Research Data Management Librarian, Technology Services, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters reminded that the Tri-Agency Research Data Management Policy launched in 2021 and required each institution to develop a Data Management Strategy and a Data Management Plan. It was noted that there is continuing uptake of data management requirements among other funders, including the Canada Foundation for Innovation, National Institutes of Health, and Horizon Europe, and it was reported that it is expected that Data Deposit requirements will come into effect in 2026. The presenters then provided an update on research data management at the University, including:
 - The University's Data Management Strategy was published in 2023, and sets out commitments including to support researchers in the use of good research data management practices. A Steering Committee is now overseeing the implementation of the strategy, and the Steering Committee has three working groups: Policies and Procedures, Sensitive Data, and Indigenous Data Sovereignty.

- Research data management supports at the University include training sessions, review of researchers' data management plans, IT infrastructure and services, and fostering a research data management culture.
- The University has been involved in projects relating to research data management, e.g., offering a workshop with the University of Waterloo
- The Data Management Strategy will be reviewed and revised as needed over time.
- Discussion included that:
 - Research data management requirements are substantial and resources, such as for data deposit expenses, are needed. The federal Research Support Fund is an avenue to assist with research data management expenses, but this will not cover all needs.
 - Research data management will continue to grow in importance.
 - Data sovereignty is a significant issue that will need to be taken seriously.
 - A report recently published by the Digital Research Alliance of Canada about the research data management landscape in Canada indicates that guidelines and resources are needed.

13. Research Awards Initiative – Phase 2

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Robert Thompson, Associate Vice-President Research, Tiago Lier, Director, Grants, Awards and Ethics, Research Services, Maryam Tahir, Research Awards and Chairs Specialist, Office of the Vice President (Research), and Erin O'Toole, Specialist, EDI in Research, Research Services Office, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters remarked that the University is home to a great number of strong researchers, but that it was realised that the institution had not been effective at having them recognized. The presenters reported on the Research Awards Initiative that was approved by the Executive Leadership Team:
 - The Research Awards Initiative launched in 2020 with the objective to build a culture where faculty members actively seek to nominate their colleagues for recognition awards and to boost the University's reputation in doing so. The initiative has a Steering Committee and working committees.
 - The Research Awards Initiative initially had three targets: 1) To double the annual number of research awards nominations by 2022, 2) to increase by 50% the annual number of research awards received by 2022, and 3) to increase by 50% the annual number of prestigious research awards received by 2024. The 2022 targets were later extended to 2024.
 - The SUPPORT: Research Awards unit was established to provide peer review of nominations and improved communications strategies were developed.
 - From 2020 to 2024, substantial growth in nominations and awards received was seen. Phase 2 of the Research Awards Initiative has now begun, with the goal of maintaining this momentum and sustaining the investment of resources in this by Faculties and the Vice-President (Research) through 2029. There will be enhanced focus on early career researchers and international awards during this second phase, and an annual institutional awards recognition event will be produced. In 2025-2026, a plan for improved data collection, in alignment with the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) principles, will be developed and piloted.

- The Research and Teaching Awards Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan was created during the first phase, and this valuable document will continue to be used.
- In response to a question, it was confirmed that in addition to an annual recognition event effort will be made to regularly publicly recognize members of the University community, such as through the UToday publication.
- Members were encouraged to nominate colleagues for recognition.

14. 2025 GFC Member Survey Results

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Courtney McVie, University Secretary, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter referred members to the detailed report in the meeting package, and highlighted that:
 - There was a 15% increase in member participation this year.
 - The responses to the Likert-like questions are very similar to the responses received last year, which indicates that no major issues recently developed.
- The presenter reported that the Secretariat will carefully consider the written comments this summer, and will make changes as needed to continue to support collegial and effective governance.
- There were no questions.

15. Approved Revisions to the Faculty of Social Work Faculty Council Terms of Reference

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

16. Approved Merger of the Academic Program Subcommittee and the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee

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

17. Standing Reports

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

- a) Report on the May 21, 2025 GFC Executive Committee Meeting
- b) Report on the May 12 and May 26, 2025 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee Meetings
- c) Report on the May 15, 2025 Research and Scholarship Committee Meeting
- d) Report on the May 13, 2025 Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting
- e) Report on the May 23, 2025 Board of Governors Meeting

18. Other Business

There was no other business.

19. Adjournment

Moved/Seconded

That the General Faculties Council adjourn the June 12, 2025 meeting.

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Courtney McVie
University Secretary