

General Faculties Council  
**ACADEMIC PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE**

Approved Minutes

June 17, 2024, 1:30-4:00 p.m.

A167 (Governors Boardroom)/Zoom

---

***Voting Members***

Robin Yates (Co-Chair)  
Dawn Johnston (Academic Co-Chair)  
Mark Bauer  
Cydnee Seneviratne  
Marjan Eggermont – arrived during Item 4, left during  
Item 7  
Shawna Cunningham  
Malinda Smith\*  
Kristin Baetz – arrived during Item 7  
Ernia Rezaei-Afsah  
Saaka Sulemana Saaka\*

***Regrets***

Barbara Brown  
Sheri Madigan

***Non-Voting Members***

Hannah Ashton  
Justine Wheeler\*  
Melanie Zimmer

***Guests***

Rebecca Archer\* (Co-Associate Dean, Curriculum, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine) – for Item 4  
John Remnant (Professor – Teaching, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine) – for Item 4  
James Searcy (Change Management Consultant, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine) – for Item 4  
Wendy Benoit (Co-Chair, Academic Program Subcommittee) – for Item 4  
Jennifer de Roaldes (Associate Registrar, Information, Admissions, and Recruitment) – for Item 5  
Amy Dambrowitz (Co-Chair, Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee) – for Items 5, 7, 8  
Oleksiy Osiyevskyy (Associate Dean, Policy and Program Development, Faculty of Graduate Studies) –  
for Item 6  
Tara Beattie (Dean and Vice-Provost, Graduate Studies and Co-Chair, Graduate Academic Program  
Subcommittee) – for Items 6 and 8  
Gail Zuk\* (Associate Dean, Undergraduate, Faculty of Social Work) – for Item 7  
Melissa Morrison (Associate General Counsel, Litigation, Student Appeals, and Policy) – for Item 8  
Megan Bos (Interim Director, Campus Planning) – for Item 9  
Mike Van Hee (Vice-President, Services) – for Item 9

***Secretary***

Courtney McVie\*

***Scribe***

Michelle Speta

***Meeting Support***

Vanessa Kozielec

***Resource Personnel***

Christine Johns  
Kelly Hoglund  
Elizabeth Pando\*  
Jessica Revington\*  
Jaclyn Carter\*

---

*\*Attended virtually*

The Academic Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 1:38 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

**1. Approval of the Agenda & Traditional Land Acknowledgement**

The Academic Co-Chair provided the traditional land acknowledgement.

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Agenda for the June 17, 2024 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee meeting be approved.

**Carried****2. Remarks of the Co-Chairs**

The Academic Co-Chair extended thanks to Melanie Zimmer, AUPE Representative for her contributions to the Committee as her term is ending on June 30, 2024.

The Co-Chair shared an overview of the past year's program proposal activity from the Program Innovation Hub's report submitted with the meeting package. The Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC) reviewed a total of 25 proposals this year (including one in today's meeting). There were 15 proposals for graduate programs and 10 for undergraduate programs.

The Co-Chair also addressed the City of Calgary's critical water supply shortage which is expected to continue for the next five weeks. The University has reduced campus water usage by an average of 28%. The University is working towards 25% water use reduction on weekdays and 40% on weekends.

**3. Approval of the May 27, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Minutes from the May 27, 2024 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee meeting be approved.

**Carried****4. Approval of the Changes to the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) Program's Curricular Structure**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. This item was presented by Rebecca Archer, Co-Associate Dean, Curriculum and John Remnant, Professor (Teaching) from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. Wendy Benoit, Academic Program Subcommittee (APS) Co-Chair, provided a preamble on the recommendation from APS.

Highlights:

- The APS Co-Chair provided an overview of the Subcommittee's feedback on the proposal, noting that the proponents were thoughtful in their approach to the student experience as they worked to address best practices for increased student enrolment. The APS further inquired into scheduling processes and details on the pedagogical approach and structure.
- The presenters explained that the goal of the proposed changes is to rearrange existing course material by creating classes that follow an integrated teaching and learning approach instead of having numerous disparate courses. For example, offering a single course about the heart, rather than learning about different aspects of the heart in six or seven different courses.

- In response to questions, it was explained that:
  - The Indigenous equine clinics have been very successful, but are financially and resource intensive, which affects the program's cost per student. Additional funding opportunities may help reach the goal of all students having the chance to engage in community outreach clinical rotations.
  - The intention of the structural changes is that curriculum integration occurs at the course-level and is not dependent solely on individual lecturers co-teaching. While faculty members can choose to co-teach, it would not be required and the time spent teaching in the new curriculum structure will be the same as current state.
  - Topics such as the effects of climate change and sustainability regarding animal health and disease prevention in the new curriculum would be addressed within the cross-body systems structure. It was noted that the curriculum will require development beyond traditional topics of study.
- The Committee's discussion included:
  - The program budget, noting concerns regarding the high cost per student and as well as the financial sustainability of cost-intensive aspects of the program such as the fourth-year clinical rotations
  - Appreciation for the Indigenous components of the proposal, including the removal of the Alberta residency requirement for Indigenous applicants, and the equine clinics being an excellent example of reciprocity with Indigenous communities
  - Appreciation for the work being done to ensure adequate staffing for the program, as well as for including support staff in consultations
  - The importance of ensuring program proposals are specific regarding their EDI commitments, and avoiding a generic, one-size-fits-all statements
- The Committee recommended that the proponents connect with the Office of Indigenous Engagement as soon as possible to discuss possible grants and other external funding options for the Indigenous equine clinics
- The Co-Chair expressed concerns surrounding the use of artificial intelligence to summarize the survey data results, which will be followed up on with the proponents to ensure appropriate data and privacy protocols are followed.

#### **Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the changes to the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program's curricular structure, effective Fall 2025, as recommended by the Academic Program Subcommittee and as set out in the proposal provided to the Committee.

**Carried**

Robin Yates abstained.

#### **5. Approval of the Revisions to the Undergraduate Admission Regulations**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. This item was presented by Jennifer de Roaldes, Associate Registrar, Information, Admissions and Recruitment.

**Highlights:**

- The presenters discussed the three main revisions being made to the undergraduate admissions regulations:
  - The removal of the dollar value of the admission deposit from the Academic Calendar
  - Updates to Faculty admission requirements, including a reported amendment to the transfer admission requirements for the divisional Science majors
  - Removal of temporary regulations that were effective for admission cycles impacted by COVID-19
  - Removal of detailed transfer credit information that will instead be provided on a new dedicated webpage
- The presenter noted that the Academic Calendar is not the primary source of information for admission deposits and that the amount of the deposit would continue to be clearly communicated to students through other avenues
- The amount of the admission deposit will be discussed by the Tuition and Fees Consultation Committee (TFCC). An increase to the admission deposit may be necessary for effective enrolment management in light of the federal government's study permit changes and the limited number of Provincial Attestation Letter (PALs) available. It is important to note that increasing the admission deposit is not an increased cost to students, as the full amount is applied to existing fees and can be used to demonstrate proof of funds for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).
- The presenters emphasized that the Fall 2025 admissions open on August 15, 2024. Therefore, approval and implementation of these changes must be completed prior to that date.

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the revisions to Section A. *Undergraduate Admissions* of the Academic Calendar, effective for Fall 2025 admissions, as recommended by the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee and as set out in the document provided to the Committee, with the reported amendment.

**Carried****6. Approval of the Revisions to Graduate Admission Regulations**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. This item was presented by Tara Beattie, Dean and Vice-Provost, Graduate Studies and Oleksiy Osiyevskyy, Associate Dean, Policy and Program Development, Faculty of Graduate Studies.

**Highlights:**

- The presenters provided an overview of the two proposed revisions to graduate admission regulations:
  - Section G.A.1 *Graduate Qualifications*: allowing the use of the Duolingo English Test for meeting English Language Proficiency (ELP) requirements indefinitely
  - Section G.A.5 *Graduate Offer of Admission*: removing the dollar amount of the admission deposit from the Academic Calendar
- The presenters explained that the Duolingo English Test was piloted for proof of ELP during the COVID-19 shutdowns in response to students' inability to access in-person English Language Testing Centres. Data

collected over the past four years indicates that the grade point averages (GPAs) for students admitted with Duolingo versus those admitted with other ELP tests are comparable. Additionally, the withdrawal rate for students admitted with Duolingo has been half that of students admitted with other ELP tests.

- The presenters explained that removing the admission deposit amount from the Academic Calendar aligns the University with peer institutions across Canada and allows more flexibility in making changes to the admission deposit amount. It has not yet been decided whether the deposit amount will be changed at this time.
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
  - The presenters affirmed that it is common practice for the admission deposit amount to not be included in the Academic Calendar and that the amount of the deposit would be widely communicated through student-facing platforms as well as the offer of admission
  - There will be no change to the current practice of waiving admission deposits for band-sponsored Indigenous students
- The Committee noted that Duolingo is beneficial for students due to its cost-efficiency and accessibility

#### **Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the revisions to Graduate Regulations Section G.A.1 *Graduate Qualifications* and Section G.A.5 *Graduate Offer of Admission* of the Academic Calendar, effective for Fall 2025 admissions, as recommended by the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee and as set out in the documents provided to the Committee.

**Carried**

#### **7. Approval of the Removal of the 'Graduation with Distinction' Designation from the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Degree**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. This item was presented by Gail Zuk, Associate Dean, Undergraduate from the Faculty of Social Work.

Highlights:

- The presenter provided an overview of the proposal to remove the 'Graduation with Distinction' designation from the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree program, noting that there was both an academic and an operational rationale for the proposed change
- The presenter explained that the Faculty of Social currently awards the 'with Distinction' designation to the top 10% of BSW graduates. Typically, the GPA for this would be calculated on 60-120 units of study, but for the BSW it is determined from only 27 units (only nine courses).
- The presenter explained that the operational rationale for the change is the need for students to receive their Letters of Completion as soon as possible. As Social Work is a regulated profession across Canada, graduates must be registered with the Alberta College of Social Work before they can be employed in the field, and require their Letter of Completion to do so. The processes involved in calculating the top 10% of graduates delay the release of these letters.

- In response to questions, it was explained that:
  - Only 27 units can be used for the GPA calculation because students enter the BSW either as University Transfer students (including After-Degree) or as Alberta Social Work Diploma holders and therefore have a large number of courses taken outside of the Faculty (or University). Practicum courses cannot be included in the calculation because they are credit/fail (CR/F).
  - There is no reputational or job competition concerns with removing the designation because most Social Work degrees across Canada are offered from Schools of Social Work, not Faculties, and therefore do not offer a 'Graduation with Distinction' designation
  - Student representatives were part of the consultation on this change. The presenter shared that student feedback was unanimous in a desire for recognition through means other than the 'Graduation with Distinction' designation (e.g., through their community contributions).
  - There are approximately 220 students who are completing their BSW requirements in June or August, and convocating in November. Under the current system, the Faculty cannot issue their Letters of Completion until October.
- The Committee expressed concerns regarding the removal of the designation, including possible unintended consequences for students' professional and academic endeavours as they are competing with students from other post-secondary institutions for job opportunities and admission to graduate studies, and potential impacts for alumni
- The Committee requested that the proposal return to a future meeting with a revised rationale. Specifically, the Committee requested the following:
  - An explanation regarding why alternative methods for determining "with Distinction" status (e.g., a specific final grade point average rather than top 10% of students) are not under consideration
  - Information on how this change might affect the upcoming four-year BSW degree program, which was approved as part of the BSW Redesign in 2022-2023
  - Information on the potential impact on students pursuing graduate studies or seeking employment outside of Alberta
  - Additional details concerning broader student consultation regarding the proposal
  - Further justifications explaining why the Social Work discipline perceives the "with Distinction" designation as relatively less significant for their students compared to those in other fields

*Secretary's Note: It was decided to postpone decision on this item.*

## **8. Approval of the Revisions to Calendar Regulations for Student Appeals**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. This item was presented by Michelle Speta, Associate Secretary and Melissa Morrison, Associate General Counsel, Litigation, Appeals, and Policy. Tara Beattie, Co-Chair, Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS) and Amy Dambrowitz, Co-Chair, Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee (CCS) provided preambles on the Subcommittees' recommendations.

**Highlights:**

- The CCS Co-Chair shared that the Subcommittee was highly engaged in discussing the proposed revisions, with a particular emphasis on Section J.1. The CCS focused on language precision, and how the language will look in practice to ensure the communications are aligned across the faculties.
- The GAPS Co-Chair shared that an important part of the revisions from a graduate student perspective was the clarification that candidacies and thesis exams are not part of the grade reappraisal process
- The presenters provided an overview of the proposed revisions to the Academic Calendar, explaining that these revisions are being made to align with policy changes approved by the Board of Governors (BoG) and the General Faculties Council (GFC) last week. Two policy changes that impact the Calendar regulations were updates to align the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) Faculty Appeals Committee Procedures with that of all other Faculties:
  - Decisions of the Dean of FGS are no longer appealable. Outcomes of the Dean's decision (e.g., Required to Withdraw (RTW)) will continue to be appealable through the existing channels.
  - Second fails on graduate student candidacy or thesis examinations are now appealable to the FGS Faculty Appeals Committee as an academic assessment decision. The associated RTW decision will continue to be appealable separately to the University Appeals Committee.
- The presenters explained that proposed revisions to Section I are intended to clarify the difference between grade reappraisals and grade appeals (i.e., appeals of grade reappraisal decisions) and that proposed revisions to Section J.1 are intended to clarify procedures regarding continued registration while under appeal in response to feedback from the Student Ombuds

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the revisions to student appeals Calendar regulations, effective July 1, 2024, as recommended by the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee and the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee and as set out in the document provided to the Committee.

**Carried****9. General Space Program for the Multidisciplinary Science Hub (MDSH) Project**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. This item was presented by Kristin Baetz, Dean, Faculty of Science, Mike Van Hee, Vice-President (Services), and Megan Bos, Interim Director, Campus Planning.

**Highlights:**

- The presenters provided an overview of the early plans of for the new Multidisciplinary Science Hub (MDSH) building, which will be located in what is currently Parking Lot 21, connecting to the existing Biological Sciences and Science Theatres buildings
- The MDSH building will include a vivarium; flexible, open-concept labs that are versatile and quickly adaptable between disciplines; outdoor classrooms incorporated into the surrounding landscape; and student spaces ranging from collaboration rooms to traditional study carrels
- Floors will focus on themes (e.g., agriculture, quantum, aerospace) rather than specific departments. Each floor will offer incubator space for start-up companies that are two to five people in size to provide them with direct access to researchers.

- The teaching plan will be similarly holistic, designed around skills like communication, networking, project management, and industry/government knowledge
- The building will also be home to the Science Student Success Centre, which will combine the existing Graduate Science Centre and Undergraduate Science Centre into one hub. This centre will also support the expansion of the Science Co-operative Education Program, in which more than 50% of students are expected to participate by 2030
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
  - The building's location was originally planned adjacent to the University C-Train station, but was moved after consultation including that with Indigenous Elders that highlighted the significance of the University's eastern entrance which allows the sun to enter campus
  - The building is being designed with the public in mind, to showcase science and make the campus a destination for conferences and events
  - Physical accessibility is a top priority for the design of lab spaces, and the building as a whole. The building will be net-zero and have a minimum of LEED Gold Certification.
  - Student spaces are also a top priority, recognizing the lack of study and gathering spaces in this quadrant of campus, which has been reflected in National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) scores
- The Committee discussed EDI design considerations beyond physical accessibility, such as faith-based spaces, smudge-friendly spaces, gender-inclusive washrooms, nursing spaces, and accessibility considerations for neurodivergent students
- The Committee also recommended more enclosed/private consult rooms for student advising be considered for the Science Student Success Centre's space

#### **10. Annual Committee Performance Review**

This item was presented by Courtney McVie, University Secretary for discussion.

Highlights:

- The intention of the annual committee performance review is to provide an opportunity for the Committee to discuss the overall operation of the APAC, as well as to reflect on the past year as a group
- Committee members were encouraged to send their feedback to the Secretariat and/or Co-Chairs

#### **11. Program Approvals Status Report**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only.

#### **12. Subcommittee Reports**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only.

The Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee provided a report for the meeting held May 15, 2024. The Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee provided a report for the meeting held May 16, 2024.



**13. Other Business**

There was no other business.

**14. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 3:58 p.m.

---

Courtney McVie  
University Secretary