



General Faculties Council
Academic Planning and Priorities Committee
Approved Minutes

Monday, February 24, 2025, 2:00 p.m.
Meeting #185

A167/Zoom

Voting Members

Robin Yates, Co-Chair
Dawn Johnston, Academic Co-Chair
Mark Bauer
Kristin Baetz
Michael Hart* – arrived during Item 1.3
Ernia Rezaei-Afsah
Saaka Sulemana Saaka*

Non-Voting Members

Tarun Aggarwal
Hannah Ashton
Justine Wheeler

Secretary

Courtney McVie

Scribe

Michelle Speta

Regrets

Barbara Brown
Sheri Madigan
Cydnee Seneviratne

Observers/Resource Personnel

Christine Johns, Associate Deputy Provost
Elizabeth Pando, Program Innovation Partner
Kelly Kay Spurlock*, Analyst, Planning and Reviews

Guests

Tara Beattie, Co-Chair, Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee
– present for Item 3
Barry Wylant, Graduate Program Director (MEDes, PhD), School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape
– present for Item 3

**Attended virtually*

Secretary's Note: In accordance with the General Faculties Council (GFC) Bylaws Section 8.2, the motion box and "Carried" denotation serves as the entry in the minutes that the Chair of the meeting declared the motion carried.

The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Meeting Opening

1.1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the February 24, 2025 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee meeting be approved.

Carried

1.2. Traditional Land Acknowledgement

The Co-Chair provided a Traditional Land Acknowledgement.

1.3. Remarks of the Chair

The Co-Chairs shared that:

- Students' Union (SU) elections are underway this week.
- The inaugural Executive Director of the new Office of Signature Learning Experiences will be announced this week.
- A search committee is being assembled for the Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) (VPTL) role. Wendy Benoit, Interim VPTL, has extended her term until September 2025.

2. Approval of the February 3, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee meeting held on February 3, 2025 be approved.

Carried

3. Approval of the Master of Environmental Design (MEDes) Program Changes: Degree Name Change and Specialization Terminations

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Barry Wylant, Graduate Program Director (MEDes, PhD), School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape presented this item. Tara Beattie, Co-Chair of the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS), provided comments on the GAPS' recommendation.

Highlights:

- The presenter provided an overview of the proposal to change the name of the Master of Environmental Design (MEDes) degree, explaining that the impetus for the change is that the term "environmental design" is no longer associated with the professional design disciplines of architecture, planning, and landscape architecture. The proposed new name, Master of Design Research (MDR), encompasses all professional design fields.
- It was explained that the MDR is intended for students who have completed a professional design degree, such as the Master of Architecture (MArch), Master of Planning (MPlan), or Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA), allowing them to add research skills to their professional repertoire. The MDR is also expected to attract students with professional design degrees from other institutions across Canada and internationally, including those graduating from five-year undergraduate architecture programs.
- The presenter also provided an overview of the proposal to terminate the MEDes specializations in Environmental Science, Industrial Design, Urban Design, and Planning, explaining that these are legacy specializations that have not been used since the MEDes became a thesis-based program in 2008. The only

active specialization is Environmental Design, which is proposed to be renamed as the specialization in Design Research in alignment with the degree name change.

- The Alberta government's Provider and Program Registry System (PaPRS) requires a sub-degree specialization for all degrees. In cases of named degrees, the specialization is an administrative category that matches the name of the degree. The renamed Design Research specialization (referred to internally as the area of study) serves this administrative purpose, and will not be printed on the MDR degree parchment.
- The GAPS Co-Chair shared that the GAPS' discussion focused on the proposed new name for the degree. The GAPS was satisfied that the new name is appropriate because the MDR program has a very specific target audience of design professionals.
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
 - There are Master of Design programs in Canada that focus on experience, graphic, and industrial design. The term "Research" is intended to distinguish the MDR from those programs.
 - Consultation on the degree name change included a survey of students and alumni. Response rates to the survey were relatively low, but the responses that were received were positive.
 - Research experience is seen as an asset by potential employers in the professional design disciplines.

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the termination of the Specializations in Environmental Science, Industrial Design, Urban Design, and Planning, within the Master of Environmental Design, effective July 1, 2025, as recommended by the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee and as set out in the documents provided.

Carried

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the name change for the "Master of Environmental Design with Specialization in Environmental Design" to the "Master of Design Research with Specialization in Design Research", effective July 1, 2025, as recommended by the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee and as set out in the documents provided.

Carried

4. Approval of the Termination of the University of Calgary in Qatar (UCQ) Academic Programs

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Robin Yates, Deputy Provost, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter provided an overview of the proposal to terminate academic programs offered at the University of Calgary in Qatar (UCQ), explaining that the programs are being terminated alongside the closure of the Faculty. The University of Calgary will no longer have a presence in the State of Qatar, as nursing programs are being established locally.
- There are no graduate students currently enrolled, and there are plans in place for all remaining

undergraduate students. For instances where students will not be able to graduate before the closure, they will be supported in transfer to another institution.

- In response to questions, it was explained that a small number of staff remain at UCQ at this time to support the wind-down of operations.

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the termination of academic programs offered by the University of Calgary in Qatar, effective August 31, 2025, as recommended by the Academic Program Subcommittee and Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee and as set out in the documents provided.

Carried**5. Subcommittee Reports**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only.

The Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee provided a report for the meeting held January 22, 2025. The Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee provided a report for the meeting held January 23, 2025.

6. Program Approvals Status Report

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only.

7. Other Business

There was no other business.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 2:28 p.m.

Courtney McVie
University Secretary