



General Faculties Council
Academic Planning and Priorities Committee
Approved Minutes

Monday, May 12, 2025, 2:00 p.m.
Meeting #187

A167/Zoom

Voting Members

Robin Yates, Co-Chair
Dawn Johnston, Academic Co-Chair
Kristin Baetz
Mark Bauer
Barbara Brown
Sheri Madigan*
Ari Pandes
Cydnee Seneviratne*
Irtaza Sohail*
Andrew Szeto

Secretary

Courtney McVie

Scribe

Michelle Speta

Regrets

Naomie Bakana
Michael Hart
Justine Wheeler

Non-Voting Members

Tarun Aggarwal
Hannah Ashton

Observers/Resource Personnel

Christine Johns, Associate Deputy Provost
Kelly Kay Spurlock*, Analyst, Planning and Reviews

Guests

Dan McGrath, Associate Dean, Research and Scholarships, Faculty of Graduate Studies
– present for Item 3
Safia Nathoo, Manager, Graduate Awards, Faculty of Graduate Studies
– present for Item 3
Oleksiy Osiyevskyy, Associate Dean, Policy and Program Development, Faculty of Graduate Studies
– present for Item 4
Melissa Boyce, Academic Co-Chair, Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee
– present for Item 5
Kimberley McLeod, Associate Registrar and Director, Systems and Policy
– present for Item 5
Renate Weller, Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine
– present for Item 7
Patrick Whelan, Associate Dean, Faculty Affairs and Development, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine
– present for Item 7
Marina McConkey, Associate Dean, Curriculum, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine
– present for Item 7

**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 Academic Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Meeting Opening

1.1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the May 12, 2025 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee meeting be approved.

Carried

1.2. Traditional Land Acknowledgement

The Academic Co-Chair provided a Traditional Land Acknowledgement. The Academic Co-Chair reminded committee members about the upcoming Indigenous Graduation Ceremony and that there are opportunities to volunteer at this event.

1.3. Remarks of the Chair

The Co-Chair welcomed Irtaza Sohail, Graduate Students' Association (GSA) President, to the Committee on this occasion of his first meeting.

The Co-Chair also shared updates regarding new institutional appointments, effective July 1, 2025: Dr. Anders Nygren as the Dean of the Schulich School of Engineering and Dr. Catherine Laing as the Dean of the Faculty of Nursing. The Co-Chair noted that the last convocation ceremony at University of Calgary in Qatar is underway this week.

Finally, the Co-Chair shared that the Petroleum Geology Concentration for the Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Geology has now been terminated. The suspension and eventual termination of this concentration were approved by the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC) on May 16, 2022. There are now no more students enrolled in the concentration, and therefore it has been terminated. The removal of all information about this concentration from the Academic Calendar was approved by the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee (CCS) on April 17, 2025.

2. Approval of the March 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee meeting held on March 10, 2025 be approved.

Carried

3. Approval of the Additional Revisions to Calendar Section *Faculty of Graduate Studies Scholarships and Awards*

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. From the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Dan McGrath, Associate Dean, Research and Scholarships, and Safia Nathoo, Manager, Graduate Awards, presented this item.

Highlights:

- This Calendar section came to the March 10, 2025 meeting of the APPC with revisions to increase the maximum amount that a student is permitted hold in internal competitive scholarships in alignment with recent increases in the value of Tri-agency awards. At the March 10, 2025 meeting, APPC recommended further revisions to clarify how the regulations apply to internal awards versus external awards, and to clarify the regulations regarding the exemption for Indigenous funding.
- The presenters provided an overview of the proposed additional revisions to the Calendar Section *Faculty of Graduate Studies Scholarships and Awards*. In response to APPC feedback, the following changes were made:
 - More information added about maximum amounts and what constitutes a competitive award.
 - Definition of external versus internal awards, and scholarships versus internships added.
 - Information on regulations regarding when a scholarship has to be taken up after it has been awarded added.
 - In the definitions section, the term “other awards” was changed to the more specific term “external awards and internships”. Information on internal awards was revised to clarify that this includes program-recommended awards.
 - Point of contact for student advising was added.
- The presenters explained that the information on Indigenous scholarships was not substantively revised as further discussion with the Office Indigenous Engagement is required. The intention is to provide students with more detailed information for individual Indigenous scholarship programs on the Faculty of Graduate Studies’ website.
- The presenters also reported an amendment to remove the sentence: “Students may hold one single award that may exceed the limit”, as there are some nuances regarding internal versus external awards, as well as internally administered externally funded awards. For external awards that exceed the limit, students are permitted to hold the full award, but would not be eligible for internal competitive awards. Any impacts on other external awards depend entirely on the external funder’s regulations.
- The Committee’s discussion included:
 - Scholarships and awards are complex and there are many cases of exceptions to the rule.
 - Generally speaking, the regulations are not well understood by students. Clear language in the regulations, including an explanation of the fair distribution rationale, is important to avoid misconceptions about scholarship and award funds being “taken away”. Misconceptions in this regard could have negative impacts on student recruitment.
 - Consideration should be given to developing student-facing information workshops and/or videos.
- The Committee determined that further revisions are required for clarity. The Committee also requested that:
 - The Office of Indigenous Engagement be consulted on the definition of Indigenous government funding, and specifically whether the term “political” should be removed from the following sentence: “Indigenous

government funding refers to funding such as band funding and funding secured by Indigenous students from the political organizations encompassing Indigenous (First Nations, Metis or Inuit) peoples”.

- The addition of information on the rationale for the limit on internal awards be considered.

Secretary's note: The motion was postponed to the next meeting so that the further changes identified can be included in the proposal.

4. Approval of the Revisions to the Calendar Section *Graduate-level Certificate, Diploma and Laddered Pathways*

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Oleksiy Osiyevskyy, Associate Dean, Policy and Program Development, Faculty of Graduate Studies presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter provided an overview of the revisions to the *Graduate-level Certificate, Diploma and Laddered Pathways* table, which is part of the *Credentials and Nomenclature* section of the Calendar. The revisions are to add the new graduate transdisciplinary credentials and to clearly outline the new laddered pathways that are available.
- The presenter confirmed that these revisions were reviewed and supported by Associate Deans from the teaching faculties.
- There were no questions.

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the proposed revisions to Calendar Section *Graduate-level Certificate, Diploma Programs and Laddered Pathways*, effective for the 2025-2026 Calendar, as recommended by the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee and as set out in the documents provided.

Carried

5. Approval of the Revisions to the Calendar Section *Academic Schedule Overview Regarding Tuition Refunds and Drop Dates*

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Kimberley McLeod, Associate Registrar and Director, Systems and Policy presented this item. Melissa Boyce, Academic Co-Chair, Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee (CCS) provided comments on the CCS' recommendation.

Highlights:

- The presenter provided an overview of the proposed revisions to the *Academic Schedule Overview* section of the Calendar, explaining that the revisions do not represent a change in regulations, but rather provide more information and clarity on existing practice. The new language is particularly important for students in programs with term-based tuition fees (e.g., Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, Foreign-Trained Lawyers Program).
- Block Week and non-standard courses have different drop deadlines than regular schedule courses. For a student in a program with term-based tuition, all courses must be dropped by the earliest drop deadline to

be eligible for a fee refund.

- The Academic Co-Chair of the CCS explained that the CCS focused on clarity and flow of the new language. To that end, further revisions were made following the CCS meeting and the amended version was submitted to the APPC for approval.
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
 - The term-based tuition fee structure is typically used for highly structured, cohort-style programs. Although a course-based fee structure allows more flexibility, that may not be compatible with the nature of these programs.
 - Course drop deadlines appear in the Student Centre portal. Cohort-style programs with term-based tuition typically have a high degree of communication with their students, which would include providing detailed information regarding course drop deadlines and regulations.

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the proposed revisions to the *Academic Schedule Overview*, effective for the 2025-2026 Calendar, as recommended by the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee and the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee, and as set out in the documents provided, with the reported amendments.

Carried

6. Recommendation of the Merger of the Academic Program Subcommittee and the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Robin Yates, Deputy Provost, and Courtney McVie, University Secretary presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters provided an overview of the proposal to merge two subcommittees of the APPC, the Academic Program Subcommittee (APS) and the CCS, into a single subcommittee named the Undergraduate Academic Program Subcommittee (UAPS).
- The presenters explained that the current structure sets out CCS and APS as two separate committees for the undergraduate program business, and the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS) as a single committee for the graduate program business. A subcommittee structure for the APPC dates back to the 2012 GFC Task Force to Review GFC and the GFC Standing Committees, which included the understanding that the subcommittee structure would evolve over time in response to changing governance needs as the institution matures.
- The rationale for the proposed change includes:
 - Aligning governance processes for undergraduate and graduate programs. The single committee structure (GAPS) for graduate academic programs and graduate Calendar content has proven effective, especially as the past several years have seen an increase in business coming forward that has both Calendar and academic program components and therefore does not fit comfortably in either CCS or APS alone.
 - Low volume of business for APS over the past four years. The busiest times for APS were staggered with the busiest times for CCS.

- The change is aligned with strategy 4 of *Ahead of Tomorrow* as it makes the governance process for undergraduate academic programs simpler and more streamlined.
- Alongside this proposal, the CCS Calendar Working Group and the GAPS Calendar Working Group are being reviewed with the intention of elevating the work of these bodies. Considerations include potentially moving the Working Groups out of the GFC standing committee structure to allow for more flexibility in membership and identifying ways to improve consistency between the graduate and undergraduate groups. The Decision Support Team for academic programs is a possible model for this work.
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
 - The UAPS will meet during the CCS timeslot with one additional meeting per year. Based on the review of the past four years, the combined workload is expected to be manageable with the addition of a March meeting.
 - Approvals of combined academic programs, such as a 4+1, would be routed through the subcommittees based on the nature of proposal. For example, if an existing undergraduate program was adding a +1 Master's component, the proposal would go to GAPS only. If the proposed 4+1 was a whole new program, it would go to both UAPS and GAPS.
 - University regulations currently flow through both CCS and GAPS, and would now flow through both UAPS and GAPS.
 - There will be no change to Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE) or Management and Professional Staff (MaPS) committee membership with this merger. It was noted that members from these groups are included in the proposed membership but that they are included by position (e.g., Senior Specialist, Academic Advising). The 2012 GFC Task Force to Review GFC and the GFC Standing Committees recommended that the dedicated AUPE and MaPS voices be at the higher level of governance. Ensuring that AUPE and MaPS members' voices are also captured at the start of the governance cycle is a key priority in the review of the Calendar Working Groups.

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee recommend that the General Faculties Council Executive Committee approve the merger of the Academic Program Subcommittee and the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee with the name of the merged committee to be the Undergraduate Academic Program Subcommittee, as well as proposed revisions to the meeting schedule, effective for Fall 2025, as set out in the documents provided.

Carried

Robin Yates abstained.

7. Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Unit Review Report

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. From the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Renate Weller, Dean, Marina McConkey, Associate Dean, Curriculum, and Patrick Whelan, Associate Dean, Faculty Affairs and Development, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Co-Chair provided introductory comments on the unit review process, noting that unit reviews are completed every five to seven years and involve a team of external reviewers. The reviewers are provided

with a report template and guidelines for making effective recommendations. The report presented to the APPC is the response to the reviewers' recommendations. The role of the APPC is to discuss how the Faculty is responding to reviewer recommendations. The Faculty will then return to the APPC with a progress update in the form of a midterm report.

- The presenters explained that the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine's unit review was completed in November 2024 following significant changes including the de-departmentalization of the Faculty and changes to the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) program's curricular structure in support of its expansion. The review resulted in 14 recommendations, which primarily focused on people.
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
 - In response to recommendation #2, the Faculty is intensifying efforts to ensure that non-academic staff members feel not only invited but welcome at events like weekly town halls or the recent Curriculum Retreat. The Faculty Council Terms of Reference were also recently revised to add MaPS and AUPE representatives. The Faculty is focusing on ensuring staff members feel empowered to share feedback by taking steps such as holding dedicated with meetings with staff on curriculum consultation.
 - In response to recommendation #5, the Faculty has implemented a centralized process for teaching assignments and has started the Early Career Faculty Working Group. The Working Group held 10 meetings over the course of the last year to discuss onboarding topics including University processes and protocols and professional development topics on teaching and research.
 - Regarding recommendation #13, the presenters noted there has been an increase in collaboration with the Cumming School of Medicine, particularly between individual researchers.
- The presenters explained that one of Veterinary Medicine's biggest challenges is the multi-site nature of the Faculty (Spy Hill Campus, Foothills Campus, W.A. Ranches). The Faculty has worked intensively to ensure that students have access to essential student services at the Spy Hill Campus, and starting in Fall 2025, students will no longer be required to travel to the Foothill Campus twice a week. Faculty members will continue to be based at Foothills Campus, but all faculty members are required to teach, which keeps them engaged with the Spy Hill Campus.
- Another challenge the Faculty faces is the variety of backgrounds their faculty members come from. Some come from clinical backgrounds and might not have teaching and/or research experience. The Faculty is increasing its focus on mentorship to support these faculty members' scholarly activities. The Faculty is also working on tenure and promotion support for faculty members in the teaching stream.
- The Committee recommended that the Faculty liaise with the Office of the Vice-President (Research) when developing their orientation for new faculty members.

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

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only.

9. Subcommittee Reports

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only.

The CCS provided reports for the meetings held February 27, 2025 and April 17, 2025. The APS provided a report for the meeting held March 3, 2025. The GAPS provided reports for the meetings held March 5, 2025 and April 9, 2025.

In response to questions, it was explained that the changes regarding Graduation “With Distinction” for the Bachelor of Social Work that were included in the February 27, 2025 CCS report did not come to the APPC for approval because they were at the level of Faculty regulations, not University regulations.

10. Program Approvals Status Report

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only.

11. Other Business

There was no other business.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 3:49 p.m.

Courtney McVie
University Secretary