

General Faculties Council
GFC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Approved Minutes

Meeting 66
January 29, 2020, 2:00 p.m.

A167

Voting Members

Ed McCauley, Chair
Dru Marshall, Vice-Chair
Mohamed Abdelsamie
Joule Bergerson
Sarah Eaton
Mary O'Brien
Jessica Revington
Richard Sigurdson
Hussein Warsame

Non-Voting Member

Paul Rogers

Secretary

Susan Belcher

Scribe

Elizabeth Sjogren

Regrets

Eloise Carr
Lesley Rigg
Trevor Tombe

Guests

Carla Bertsch, Sexual Violence Support Advocate and member, Task Force on Personal Relationships – present for Item 5
Deborah Book, Legal Counsel and member, Task Force on Personal Relationships – present for Item 5

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the January 29, 2020 General Faculties Council Executive Committee meeting be approved.

Carried

2. Remarks of the Chair and Vice-Chair

The Chair included the following in his remarks:

- The University is being impacted by the provincial government's recent budget decisions, including an in-year budget cut and the transition to a performance based funding model and an

Investment Management Agreement (IMA). For the 2020-2021 budget year, 15% of the University's Campus Alberta grant will be dependent on meeting performance metrics, and this will increase to 40% over time. An executive team is working on the University's proposed metrics, within the framework developed by the provincial government, and consultation on this will include the General Faculties Council (GFC).

- Diversity Days events, celebrating diversity and inclusion at the University, are occurring from January 28-30, 2020, and the campus community is thanked for its participation and support
- Bell Let's Talk Day is January 31, 2020, and activities will take place across the University
- Jessica Revington, Students' Union (SU) President and the current SU representative on the Committee, was thanked for her service on this occasion of her last meeting. Kevin Dang, SU Vice-President Academic, will serve as the SU's new representative on the Committee starting in February.

The Vice-Chair included the following in her remarks:

- The IMA is not a complete replacement of the Comprehensive Institutional Plan, as the IMA does not include reporting on matters such as programs, international initiatives, and partnerships
- It is anticipated that the provincial government's 2020-2021 budget will be announced in early March. Work continues on developing the University's 2020-2021 budget, including consultations with stakeholder groups and the roll up of unit budgets.
- Three searches are currently underway. The appointment of the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies should be announced soon, the search for a Dean of the Faculty of Social Work has been short-listed, and the first round of interviews for a Vice-Provost (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) are taking place.

3. Approval of the November 27, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the General Faculties Council Executive Committee meeting held on November 27, 2019 be approved.

Carried

4. Recommendation of the Establishment of the 2020-2021 GFC Elected Membership Distribution

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. The Chair and Susan Belcher presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents provided an overview of the 2020-2021 GFC elected membership distribution, as calculated by the Office of Institutional Analysis
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - One ex officio seat, formerly held by the Vice-President (University Relations) and

currently vacant, has been removed from the calculation for 2020-2021 since this position has been abolished

- Per the Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA), the distribution of elected academic staff members on the GFC is calculated proportionally based on the academic staff member population of each Faculty
- The PSLA provides that the GFC may appoint additional members. The GFC has added a variety of members including students and additional academic staff members.
- The Committee discussed the appointment of additional members, including whether a formula based on the student population of Faculties would be appropriate

Moved/Seconded

That the General Faculties Council (GFC) Executive Committee recommend that the GFC establish the total number of elected members to be on the GFC and determine and assign to each Faculty the number of members that may be elected by that Faculty, as set out in the document provided to the Committee.

Carried

5. Recommendations from the Task Force on Personal Relationships

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Carla Bertsch and Deborah Book presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents provided an overview of the history and work of the Task Force on Personal Relationships, which was struck by the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) approximately one year ago. The proponents then gave an overview of the recommendations of the Task Force before the Committee for discussion, noting that, in addition to the proposed University Statement on Relationships, the University has other documents that govern behaviour and guide administrators such as the Code of Conduct, Sexual Harassment Policy, and Sexual Violence Policy.
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - The Code of Conduct is not under revision at this time, and so the Task Force is recommending revisions to the Code of Conduct's web-based FAQs to add clarity about relationships
 - There are experts at the University who can be tasked with the development of the comprehensive education initiative recommended by the Task Force, and members of the Task Force may or may not be involved with this
- Discussion included that:
 - The scenarios included in the report are helpful in understanding conflicts
 - The University Statement on Relationships could go further and outright ban intimate relationships between persons when one is in a position of authority over the other, rather than providing that such conflicts should be reported and managed
 - The definition of 'supervisor' could be improved, to be clear that it includes persons such as Graduate Assistants
 - The phrases "close personal relationship" and "close personal friendship" are more

ambiguous than the phrases “romantic relationship”, “intimate relationship” and “sexual relationship”, and that clear guidance will be needed

- Revisions to the Code of Conduct are needed, and the report could signal when this is expected to occur
- The phrase “same or the opposite sex” should be reviewed by someone such as the Vice-Provost (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)
- In response to a question, it was confirmed that the Task Force is scheduled to meet before the next GFC meeting and so will be able to consider the feedback received from the Committee and confirm the recommendations in the report that will be presented to the GFC

6. 2020 GFC Member Survey

The Chair and Susan Belcher presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents suggested that, rather than proceeding again in 2020 with the GFC member survey that has been used for the past three years, a session be held after the adjournment of the March or April GFC meeting, at which members will be asked to engage in a dialogue about the functioning of the GFC. The proponents noted that response rates to the survey have been declining and the survey responses are very similar year to year and so a dialogue may be a better format for feedback at this juncture.
- Discussion included that:
 - A session of this nature would allow members to engage with each other as well as the Chair and Vice-Chair, and that immediate responses to questions and concerns could be given
 - Notes should be taken during the session, and members should be invited to submit written comments following the session
 - A collation of the comments made during the session and those submitted following the session, will be included in the package for the next GFC meeting in order to allow for a follow-up discussion to take place as appropriate
 - The session should be chaired by someone other than the GFC Chair or Vice-Chair
 - Prompting questions should be available to the chair of the session to facilitate the dialogue
- The proponents indicated that a message would be sent to the GFC members in advance of the session so that members have an opportunity to think about what they’d like to say. The Committee suggested that this message include recognition of common concerns, such as the acoustics in the GFC meeting room, so that time at the session can be spent discussing other matters.

7. Review of the Draft February 13, 2020 GFC Agenda

The Committee reviewed the draft February 13, 2020 GFC Agenda. The Committee made some minor adjustments and agreed that a discussion item entitled “Performance Metrics” be added.

8. Other Business

In response to a question, management responded that GFC meetings are open and so the contents of the meetings may be shared, however, members are asked not to share a document that is moving through the approval process because the document may change or may ultimately be withdrawn or not approved.

9. Adjournment

Moved/Seconded

That the General Faculties Council Executive Committee adjourn the January 29, 2020 meeting.

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 3:02 p.m.

Susan Belcher
University Secretary