



General Faculties Council
GFC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Approved Minutes

Meeting 77
April 28, 2021, 2:00 p.m.

By Zoom platform

Voting Members

Ed McCauley, Chair
Teri Balsler, Vice-Chair
Semhar Abraha
Joule Bergerson
Sarah Eaton
Meghan McDonough
Mary O'Brien
Alex Paquette
Bill Rosehart
Richard Sigurdson
April Viczko – arrived during Item 1
Hussein Warsame

Non-Voting Member

David Stewart

Secretary and Scribe

Elizabeth Sjogren

Guests

Melissa Morrison, Student Appeals Officer – present for Item 6
Francine Smith, Co-Chair, Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Working Group – present for Item 7
Florentine Strzelczyk, Co-Chair, Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Working Group – present for Item 7
Cherie Tutt, Director, University Secretariat and Student Appeals Office

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the April 28, 2021 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:

- Members were thanked for their efforts during the Winter 2021 semester
- Teri Balsler, new Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Vice-Chair of the Committee, was introduced on this occasion of her first meeting

- Semhar Abraha, Students' Union Vice-President (Academic), was acknowledged on this occasion of her last Committee meeting
- The federal budget was announced on April 19, 2021 and is a student-friendly budget including investments in the areas of work-integrated learning, Mitacs innovation funding, the Quantum Canada initiative, and Indigenous education
- Cabinet made no changes to the strategies in *Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs*, and it will be launched tomorrow. The Alberta 2030 strategies align with many of the University's priorities and goals, and post-graduation employment has long been a metric studied by the University.
- The report on the Growth Through Focus feedback has been received and will be posted on the University's website next week, and a revised framework will be brought to General Faculties Council (GFC) for discussion
- The federal Immigration Minister has committed to improving the international students visa process
- The University's annual Giving Day was held on April 22, 2021 and a record amount was raised

The Vice-Chair included the following in her remarks:

- Members were thanked for their participation in this year's Promotion Review Committee process
- There remain uncertainties about the Fall 2021 semester, and the Faculties have been asked to plan based on two scenarios that will depend on the state of the pandemic: largely in-person instruction or instruction like the Winter 2021 semester. The Fall semester will not be a full return to 'normal' even if largely in-person instruction is determined to be possible. Much has been learned since March 2020, and quality learning experiences and health and safety remain the priorities. More certain information regarding Fall 2021 will be communicated in late May.

In response to concerns about the communication sent to academic staff members yesterday regarding the Fall 2021 semester, the Vice-Chair acknowledged that people have genuine concerns about health and safety, and that plans for delivery of courses and other matters can be finalised closer to the Fall.

3. Approval of the March 24, 2021 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 March 24, 2021 be approved.

Carried

4. Appointment of One Academic Staff Member of GFC to the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda.

The Committee named, in rank order, academic staff members of GFC to be approached by the University Secretariat to serve on the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee. The first individual to agree to serve will be deemed appointed by the Committee, effective July 1, 2021 and for a three-year term.

5. Appointment of University Appeals Committee Appeal Review Administrators

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda.

The Committee named, in rank order, academic staff members to be approached by the University Secretariat to serve as Appeal Review Administrators of the University Appeals Committee. The first six individuals to agree to serve will be deemed appointed by the Committee, effective immediately and ideally until June 30, 2024.

6. Revisions to the Student Misconduct and Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Melissa Morrison and Cherie Tutt presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents provided an overview of the appeals policy suite, which came into effect in January 2019, and reported that the proposed revisions add clarity, respond to stakeholder feedback, and align with recent revisions to other related policies. The presenters then described the two more significant revisions, which are to remove 'procedural fairness' and substitute 'accurate application of relevant regulations' as a ground for academic progression appeals and to shift the authority for granting extensions to the Student Appeals Officer.
- In response to questions, the proponents explained:
 - The difference between 'academic assessment' and 'graded term work' and that graded term work cannot be appealed to the University Appeals Committee
 - Why the ground of 'procedural fairness' is not applicable to appeals of academic progression
 - That many students appeal academic progression matters using the ground of 'new information'

7. Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Francine Smith and Florentine Strzelczyk presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents reminded the Committee of the history of the Academic Staff Criteria and Processes (ASCP) Handbook, and explained that the proposal includes revisions to the recently approved ASCP Handbook Part A and the new ASCP Handbook Part B. The proponents then provided an overview of the content of the new ASCP Handbook Part B, including position posting procedures, selection procedures, and expedited procedures for spousal and strategic hiring.
- In response to questions, the proponents explained:
 - Why the term 'equity deserving' is being used instead of 'equity seeking'
 - That there are a variety of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Indigenous engagement trainings offered at the University, by units including Human Resources and the EDI Office. The Committee observed that consistency in training is desirable.

- That the ASCP Working Group made effort to define the ‘exceptional circumstances’ when expedited hiring procedures can be used, as it is not intended for the strategic hiring process to undermine the regular process. The proponents noted that the strategic hiring process also involves the use of an academic appointment selection committee, and so there will be checks and balances.
- That some Faculties do not want for a student to have a voting seat on an academic appointment selection committee, and so the Handbook provides that the voting or non-voting status of a student member be described in the relevant Faculty Guidelines and that Faculties can employ other mechanisms to obtain student feedback
- The wording “marriage or common-law relationship” is believed to be current legal terminology, but this will be confirmed
- Appointment with tenure is only possible when hiring to the Associate Professor rank, not at the Assistant Professor rank, and the position posting must clearly state if multiple ranks or streams are to be considered by the academic appointment selection committee
- The Committee suggested that:
 - The membership of an academic appointment selection committee as set out in section 5.1.1.e not be limited to a *senior level* graduate student
 - Section 5.6.2 (Recommendation of Appointment With Tenure) be linked to section 4.4 (Position Posting), for clarity
 - A typo in section 7.4.8 be corrected to read “interested members of the home unit”
- The Chair observed that it is expected that this item will return to the Committee in May, for recommendation to GFC

8. Review of the Draft May 13, 2021 GFC Agenda

The Committee reviewed the draft May 13, 2021 GFC Agenda, and discussed:

- Adding a new standing item to the GFC agendas, during which a Land Acknowledgement will be read by a Dean or delegate and then they will highlight an inclusive practice in their unit
- That the Growth Through Focus Update will be a 30-minute discussion item

9. Other Business

There was no other business.

10. Adjournment

The April 28, 2021 meeting of the General Faculties Council Executive Committee was adjourned by consensus.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.