



General Faculties Council  
**GFC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**  
Approved Minutes

October 24, 2022, 2:00 p.m.

By Zoom platform

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***Voting Members***

Ed McCauley, Chair  
Jessica Ayala  
Joule Bergerson  
Olive Chapman  
Rachel Lauer  
Aoife Mac Namara  
Satish Raj  
Bill Rosehart  
Melanee Thomas

***Non-Voting Member***

David Stewart

***Secretary***

Courtney McVie

***Scribe***

Elizabeth Sjogren

***Regrets***

Shaziah Jinnah Morsette  
James Steele  
Penny Werthner, Vice-Chair

***Guests***

John Alho, Associate Vice President – Government Relations and Community Engagement – present for Item 2  
Deborah Book, Legal Counsel – present for Item 2

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The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m., confirmed quorum, and thanked the members for making time for this special meeting.

**1. Approval of the Agenda**

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Agenda for the October 24, 2022 General Faculties Council Executive Committee meeting be approved.

**Carried**

## 2. Recommendation of Revisions to the Partisan Political Activities Policy

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. John Alho and Deborah Book presented this item.

### Highlights:

- The proponents explained that the proposed revisions to the Partisan Political Activities Policy include aligning the University with recent changes to Alberta’s Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act (the Act), and described the consultation process that was followed in developing the revisions
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
  - Because the Act prohibits University resources from being used to establish a third party advertising entity, it is being proposed that the policy explicitly state this
  - “Partisan Political Activity” is defined in the policy (and this is the same as defined in the Act) and other actions, including providing commentary on matters such as climate change or the pandemic, are not included in this definition. The University community includes subject matter experts and they are considered to have a responsibility to add to public discourse.
  - Expressing opinions on matters relating to politics (e.g. the Sovereignty Act or provincial curriculum) is not interpreted as being in contravention of the policy
- Discussion included:
  - The use of the phrase “knowledge mobilization” when identifying activities that are not prohibited by the policy, and that the phrase may not be all-encompassing and may not be understood by persons external to the University. The presenters reported that a broad interpretation of “knowledge mobilization” is intended, and that the policy will be administered with common sense. The presenters indicated that they are reluctant to be too specific in describing what activities are not prohibited, to prevent an unintended omission.
  - That persons outside the University may look at some activities as partisan when they are not considered so by the University, and may inappropriately use the policy as a tool against University members. The presenters noted that the policy has never had to be enforced by the Implementation Authority, and that normally any concerns raised about activities are addressed through conversations and answering questions.
  - That persons may try to utilise the policy to attack members of the University community who are saying things and/or engaging in activities that these persons do not like, and so protections for University members are desired
  - Section 4.15 (Application of this Policy) does not address that persons outside the University may interpret “Partisan Political Activity” differently than defined in the policy. The presenters reported that the Government Relations office will confer with Legal Services before providing any advice or addressing any concerns linked to the policy.

### **Moved/Seconded**

That the General Faculties Council (GFC) Executive Committee recommend that the GFC recommend that the Human Resources and Governance Committee approve the revisions to the Partisan Political Activities Policy, as set out in the document provided to the Committee.

**Carried**

**3. Adjournment**

**Moved/Seconded**

That the General Faculties Council Executive Committee adjourn the October 24, 2022 meeting.

**Carried**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

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Courtney McVie  
University Secretary