

General Faculties Council  
**TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE**  
Approved Minutes

January 17, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

A167

***Voting Members***

Leslie Reid, Co-Chair  
Barbara Brown, Academic Co-Chair  
Fabiola Aparicio-Ting – via Zoom – left during Item 6  
Wendy Benoit  
William Bridel  
Tracey Clancy  
Dianne Gereluk  
Shaziah Jinnah Morsette  
Dawn Johnston  
Hieu Ngo

***Regrets***

Rebecca Archer  
Heather Ganshorn  
Yani Jazayeri  
Barb McCutcheon  
Jennifer Markides  
Fabian Neuhaus  
Evaristus Oshionebo  
Mary-Jo Romaniuk  
James Steele  
Justine Wheeler  
Leighton Wilks

***Guests***

Robin Arseneault, Teaching & Learning Project Coordinator, Taylor Institute – for Item 4  
Kim Johnston, Associate Dean (Teaching & Learning and Mental Wellness), Schulich School of Engineering  
– for Item 5

***Non-Voting Members***

Michelle Drefs – via Zoom  
Natasha Kenny  
Brenda McDermott  
D’Arcy Norman  
Trevor Poffenroth  
Verity Turpin – via Zoom – left during Item 6

***Secretary***

Courtney McVie

***Scribe***

Elizabeth Sjogren

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The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 2:07 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

**1. Approval of the Agenda**

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Agenda for the January 17, 2023 Teaching and Learning Committee meeting be approved.

**Carried**

## **2. Remarks of the Co-Chair and Academic Co-Chair**

The Co-Chair observed that the ChatGPT artificial intelligence chatbox is seeing increased use, including to cheat when writing course assignments, and this will be discussed by the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) at an upcoming meeting because the University community has many questions and concerns about this in the postsecondary learning environment.

The Academic Co-Chair included the following in her remarks:

- The Winter 2023 term is underway
- There is excitement about the upcoming changes to the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) system at the University

## **3. Approval of the December 13, 2022 Meeting Minutes**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

### **Moved/Seconded**

That the Minutes of the Teaching and Learning Committee meeting held on December 13, 2022 be approved.

**Carried**

## **4. New University of Calgary Teaching Award (Inclusive Excellence)**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Leslie Reid, Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning), Robin Arsenault, Teaching & Learning Project Coordinator, Taylor Institute (TI), Hieu Ngo, Faculty of Social Work, and William Bridel, Faculty of Kinesiology, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents presented the current draft of the proposed terms of reference for a new University of Calgary Teaching Award in Inclusive Excellence, highlighting the changes made to the terms of reference since the TLC reviewed and offered feedback on a previous draft
- Discussion included:
  - The provision of award package preparation support in the summer of 2023 is welcomed
  - Workload is an ongoing issue, and the intention to reconsider the entire Teaching Awards program (possibly including creating a webform for the award application, reducing the length of the nomination submission, option for video submissions from the nominee and supporters, and provision of writing support) in consideration of the workload involved with preparing a nomination is applauded. The workload of award nominees and nominators, and the TI staff who support the awards program, should be considered.
  - Institutional recognition could build towards national and international awards recognition. Enabling nominees to create a teaching dossier that could be easily revised to use for other awards programs, such as the 3M National Teaching Fellowship, is desirable.

- The Teaching Awards adjudication process can have a rubric checklist feel, and so the adjudication process should be reviewed as part of the program review, to ensure that adjudicators are trained to recognize indicators, including of workload, impacting nomination and to be flexible
- The University's recent efforts in the areas of Indigenous Engagement and EDIA have fostered holistic thinking and consideration of the University's values
- The Teaching Awards in Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Inclusive Excellence will not be the only award categories for equity-deserving persons, and the program review should ensure that there is clear accessibility of all the awards in the program to all persons

#### **Moved/Seconded**

That the Teaching and Learning Committee recommend that the General Faculties Council approve the addition of a new 'Award for Inclusive Excellence in Teaching and Learning' to the University of Calgary Teaching Awards Program, as set out in the document provided to the Committee.

**Carried**

#### **5. T&L Subcommittee of the Campus Mental Health Strategy Recommendations for Academic Regulations around Fall and Winter Breaks**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Shaziah Jinnah Morsette, Vice-President (Academic), Students' Union (SU), and Kim Johnston, Associate Dean (Teaching & Learning and Mental Wellness) and co-chair of the T&L Subcommittee of the CMHS, Schulich School of Engineering, presented this item.

#### Highlights:

- The proponents reported that the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee of the Campus Mental Health Strategy has been discussing the University's Fall and Winter term breaks, including the need for increased understanding in the University community about the purpose of these periods and the possible need for Calendar regulations or other official guidelines about these
- Discussion included:
  - There should be no requirement for work during a term break, but communications about a term break should not discourage students from doing work during this period if they wish to do so. Whether the term break is used for a restorative wellness period or for catching up on coursework should be up to the individual.
  - Having an assignment due right after a term break is acceptable as long as there was time before the break for work on this or if a Friday-to-Monday assignment is normal for the course. The course outline should clearly set out assignment expectations and due dates so that students can budget their time, and the course outline should clearly set out when assessments will occur.
  - Thanksgiving time is too early for a term break, but the Remembrance Day time is rather late in the term. It was noted that the Calgary Board of Education is instating a term break at the Remembrance Day time starting in 2023.
  - A culture shift away from the use of the term "reading break" is needed
  - The University community should be thinking about mental health and wellbeing and cognitive load throughout the terms, and not just in relation to term breaks

- Some instructors use the term break as a time to hold meetings and catch up on other work, but students would benefit from seeing their instructors take an authentic break
- Not all Faculties have program cohorts, so it is not possible to ensure that their students have well-spaced out assignments and assessments. Having clear and enforceable regulations for when assignments can be due and assessments can be scheduled may ensure that the term break can be used for rest if needed.
- Calendar section G.6 sets out the regulation for if a student has three final exams in a 24-hour period and allows for one of these exams to be deferred. Perhaps a similar process is needed for if a student has three midterm exams or large assignments in a cluster.
- Deferrals are currently granted for class conflicts, religious conviction, and debilitating illness, but the deferral process could consider a broader range of factors, including childcare obligations and other reasonable situations
- Some students have practicum work, clinical placements, or internships during the term break, and non-standard programs (e.g. in the Werklund School of Education, Faculty of Nursing, Cumming School of Medicine, and Faculty of Veterinary Medicine) are becoming more common
- It is critical to think about courses and programs with a lens of mental health and wellbeing, and these should be grounded by current post-secondary and national mental health and wellness best practices
- Students should be learning to manage their time in order to meet their courseloads
- The workplace has mandated vacation time and so it is reasonable for students to take a restorative break during a term. The presenters noted that the Academic Schedule was adjusted at the time that the Fall term break was created in order that the number of instructional days would be maintained and it could be recommended that people take a break during the Fall term break.
- Consideration should be given to emotional, physical, and academic wellbeing, and the term break should be used for whatever the individual determines they need most, resting or catching up. Course work should not be due during or immediately after the term break, but those persons who wish to use the break for catch up should not be prescriptively discouraged from this.
- Any Calendar regulations relating to term breaks should include clear direction about how students access accommodations and/or support or report any need for enforcement of the regulations

## **6. Teaching and Learning Round Table: Mid-year Check In on TLC**

The members of the TLC were given an opportunity to discuss the functioning of the TLC and general matters currently impacting teaching and learning, and discussed that:

- As part of the University's EDI Week 2023, there is a workshop session on February 7, 2023 entitled "When Assessment Practices Create Inequities: Biases Embedded in Exam and Test Designs" and members of the TLC might be interested in attending this
- Conversations regarding the required content of course outlines and when course outlines are provided are needed. Course outlines should clearly set out all mandatory elements of a course, such as if students are required to attend peer students' course presentations, and the course

outline should be provided to students in a timely manner, especially so that accessibility needs such as a notetaker or specialized furniture can be arranged. This is a complicated subject, because students want to receive course information as soon as possible but this information needs to be in finalised form.

- The University provides a number of mental health and accessibility supports and services, and efforts are being made to improve awareness of and the efficiency and effectiveness of these
- The use of artificial intelligence (AI) programs by students, such as the ChatGPT chatbot, is on the rise, but instructors may not be able to identify this type of cheating
- The Information Technologies unit (IT) is working with the TI to update the University's classroom technology standards, and IT is requesting additional funding to conduct needed classroom improvements. Equipment sourcing and supply chain will continue to be challenges, and the University needs to develop a forward-looking strategy for learning spaces and classroom technology. Teaching and assessment options are limited by classroom spaces, and so it is welcomed that classroom improvements will be made in consideration of learning.
- Departments undergoing curriculum reviews could benefit from assistance on some components, such as curriculum mapping, and this could also improve engagement with the review
- A workshop entitled "Considerations for Assessments in Large Enrolment Classes" is being hosted by the TI on January 25, 2023
- Conversations about the wellbeing of instructors are needed, including in relation to teaching load and academic freedom. There are increasing expectations of instructors, including to meet student needs, utilize technology, and engage in teaching development, and deep conversations about these expectations are needed.
- The collegial meetings of the TLC allow for the sharing of perspectives on matters relating to teaching and learning, and members can learn from one another. Appreciation for the TLC's leadership was expressed.

#### **7. Course Feedback Implementation Working Group (CFIWG) Update**

The Co-Chair reported that the TLC will soon be seeing items of business arising from the work of the CFIWG, such as the replacement of the Class Climate evaluation system with the Explorance system and proposed new USRI questions.

#### **8. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning Report**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Natasha Kenny, Senior Director of the TI, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The TI has seen significantly increased access of the TI's resources by instructors
- Yesterday was the deadline to apply for the University of Calgary Teaching and Learning Grants. The technology behind the application process was not as smooth as wanted, and so thought is going into how to improve this for the next intake.
- The keynote speakers for the 2023 Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching have been announced: Sarah Eaton, Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary (on academic

integrity), Jesse Stommel, Writing Program, University of Denver (on ungrading), Aubrey Hanson, Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary (on Indigenous Ways of Knowing), and Maha Bali, Center for Learning and Teaching, American University in Cairo, Egypt (on equity)

#### **9. Graduate Students' Association Report**

There was no report.

#### **10. Students' Union Report**

Shaziah Jinnah Morsette, SU member of the committee, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The deadline to nominate for the 2022-2023 SU Teaching Excellence Awards is February 24, 2023, and students are encouraged to make nominations
- The SU's 2022-2023 annual student survey is now open, and will gather responses until February 13, 2023
- An international student townhall will be held in MacEwan Hall on January 19, 2023, and this will be attended by the provincial Minister of Trade, Immigration and Multiculturalism

#### **11. Other Business**

There was no other business.

#### **12. Adjournment**

The January 17, 2023 Teaching and Learning Committee meeting was adjourned by consensus.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

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Courtney McVie  
University Secretary