

General Faculties Council
TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE
Approved Minutes

May 16, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

AD 167

Voting Members

Leslie Reid, Co-Chair
Barbara Brown, Academic Co-Chair
Sandra Amin
Rebecca Archer*
Wendy Benoit
William Bridel
Tracey Clancy
Heather Ganshorn* – left during Item 6
Dianne Gereluk – arrived during Item 4
Dawn Johnston
Kirsten Neprily
Hieu Ngo*

Regrets

Fabiola Aparicio-Ting
Yani Jazayeri
Jennifer Markides
Fabian Neuhaus
Evaristus Oshionebo
Leighton Wilks

Guests

Nicole Wyatt, Academic Co-Chair, Course Feedback Implementation Working Group (CFIWG) – present for Item 4
Jackie Lambert, member, CFIWG – present for Item 4
Brianna Burkinshaw, member, CFIWG – present for Item 4
Fouzia Usman, member, CFIWG – present for Item 4
Robin Arseneault, member, CFIWG – present for Item 4

**Attended by Zoom*

Non-Voting Members

Michelle Drefs
Natasha Kenny
Barb McCutcheon*
Brenda McDermott
D'Arcy Norman
Trevor Poffenroth – arrived during Item 1
Mary-Jo Romaniuk*
Verity Turpin*
Justine Wheeler* – left during Item 6

Secretary

Courtney McVie

Scribe

Elizabeth Sjogren

The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the May 16, 2023 Teaching and Learning Committee meeting be approved.

Carried

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

The Co-Chair included the following in her remarks:

- Sandra Amin, Students' Union (SU), and Kirsten Neprily, Graduate Students' Association (GSA), were welcomed on this occasion of their first Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) meeting
- Barb McCutcheon, Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, and Brenda McDermott, Management and Professional Staff, were acknowledged on this occasion of their last TLC meeting
- It was reported that the Co-Chair will continue in her role until December 2023 and that the Academic Co-Chair is being re-appointed to serve for 2023-2024

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

- Members were thanked for another year of service. It was remarked that there are valuable discussions at the TLC's meetings, and members were thanked for their engagement.
- The Taylor Institute's Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching, held April 26-28, 2023, was excellent, and the keynote presentations were especially powerful. Appreciation was expressed for the online participation options.

3. Approval of the April 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the Teaching and Learning Committee meeting held on April 18, 2023 be approved.

Carried

4. Update from the Course Feedback Implementation Working Group (CFIWG) – Feedback on Draft Core Questions

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Leslie Reid, Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) and Co-Chair of the Course Feedback Implementation Working Group (CFIWG), Nicole Wyatt, Academic Co-Chair of the CFIWG, and CFIWG members Wendy Benoit, Brianne Burkinshaw, Jackie Lambert, Fouzia Usman, Justine Wheeler, and Robin Arseneault presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters reported on the recent work of the CFIWG, including that:
 - In response to the feedback given by the TLC at its April meeting, the CFIWG has decided to recommend fewer core institutional questions and to reduce the question themes to four
 - The CFIWG will be recommending the core institutional survey questions and the total number of questions in the new course feedback survey, but will not be recommending the Faculty, program, and instructor questions

- Discussion of the draft core institutional survey questions included:
 - Seeking additional comments from students for some questions will provide valuable information
 - The proposed question “The feedback I received contributed to my learning” could read “received from the instructor and teaching assistant” or “feedback on my assessments” to ensure that students understand what this question is asking about. It was also suggested that this question could have a display logic for additional comments as understanding how the feedback was or was not useful would be valuable.
 - The proposed question “I was encouraged to think about the subject matter from multiple perspectives” may not apply to all courses, especially those involving controversial subject matter or content that does not have perspectives (e.g., low level Math). The presenters remarked that this question is intended to determine if students are feeling supported in discussing and thinking critically about course content, but that if this is not clear the CFIWG will reconsider this wording. It was suggested that the question could read “integrate and think deeply about”.
 - The proposed question “I felt welcomed and included in the classroom environment” could read “learning environment” or “course” since some courses have labs and tutorials in addition to classroom learning. It was noted that students may not understand what is meant by concepts such as ‘learning environment’ and ‘integrate learning’.
 - The proposed question “I felt welcomed and included in the classroom environment” could receive negative responses from students feeling gender or racial discrimination, and become less focused on the course. Additionally, a student who reports a negative experience may expect action to be taken and because the University has a commitment to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility thought needs to go into what will be done with the information received from the survey. The presenters noted that this goes beyond the scope of the CFIWG, but observed that the current University Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) survey does say that “feedback is shared with your course instructor and their academic leaders”.
 - Instructors would like feedback on their approach to teaching and the effectiveness of their teaching methods, and the proposed questions may not provide this. The presenters remarked that students may not have the knowledge to assess teaching strategies and pedagogy, and it was observed that some less effective teaching methods (e.g., lecture) are liked by some students and some effective teaching methods (e.g., flipped classroom) are not liked by some students, and so there is risk that an instructor’s approach may not be assessed fairly. The presenters noted that an instructor could conduct a separate mid-year evaluation to seek student feedback on their teaching effectiveness.
 - The proposed question “The course outline, including information about learning outcomes and course expectations, was clear” may not be appropriate because in some programs the course outline is provided to the instructor and so the instructor should not be evaluated on what they have not written. It was observed that instructors direct students to the course outlines, and so the wording of this question could be revised to be more about communication than course outline content.
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - While students may feel differently about some components, the question “Course projects, assignments, tests and/or exams provided opportunity for me to demonstrate my learning in this course” is worded this way because not all courses will have all components and because students may not understand the meaning of the general

phrase 'course assessments'. The CFIWG felt that it is important to have a question about assessment, but that the question needs to be relevant to all courses.

- Because students will be doing the survey in each of their courses, it is not being recommended to lengthen the survey by having each question have an additional comments option. It is hoped that the final proposed open response question will allow students to communicate about what they care most about.
 - The CFIWG first decided upon the themes for the questions (Feedback on Learning, Learning Skills, Learning Outcomes, and Learning Atmosphere), then discussed the possible questions
 - The Faculty, program and/or instructor questions will ask about a student's discipline-specific learning
 - The Explorance Blue platform will allow for some questions in the survey to be directed to undergraduate and graduate courses as appropriate. The CFIWG will explore whether a core question can differ and be directed to undergraduate course levels.
 - The display logic for additional comments is set to trigger only on the lower end member responses, but consideration can be given to seeking additional comments from all respondents
 - The proposed questions are worded such that the same Likert scale can be used for all questions, for consistency
 - Once approved, the new course feedback survey will be piloted in order to determine if the questions and technology are working as intended, and the survey will be strengthened based on feedback received
- The TLC heard that the CFIWG will continue to work, and that the next step will be to provide the proposed core institutional survey questions to the University community for feedback. In response to a question, it was reported that the communications about this will say that the TLC was consulted during the drafting of the questions and will not portray that the TLC has approved the questions.

5. Calendar Updates: Course Outlines (Section E) & Tests and Assessments (Section G)

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

The Co-Chair reported that a working group is being formed to consider changes to the Academic Regulations in the University Calendar, to improve the sections on Course Outlines and Examinations and Tests. Members of the TLC were invited to express interest in joining this working group.

6. Annual Committee Performance Review and Review of the TLC Terms of Reference

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

The TLC members reviewed the committee's functioning, and feedback included celebration of the committee's engaged and collegial discussions about matters of importance to the University and praise for the committee's leadership. Members expressed appreciation for the hybrid format of the meetings.

The University Secretary reported that a review of the Terms of Reference for all the General Faculties Council standing committees will be conducted next year, and suggestions for revision are welcomed.

7. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning Report

Natasha Kenny, Senior Director of the Taylor Institute, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching is a major undertaking for the Taylor Institute, and work on this continues throughout the year
- The call for nominations for the University of Calgary Teaching Awards has gone out, and the deadline is September 22, 2023. It is hoped that the nominations will be diverse, including nominations of Teaching Professors.

8. Graduate Students' Association Report

Kirsten Neprily, GSA member of the committee, presented this item.

There was no report, but it was remarked that it is important for students to know that they are being heard and so the continuing process to replace the USRI will be a focus of the GSA next year.

9. Students' Union Report

Sandra Amin, SU member of the committee, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Spring semester is underway
- The SU is not hearing of any pressing concerns from students at this time

10. Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Adjournment

The May 16, 2023 meeting of the Teaching and Learning Committee was adjourned by consensus.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:52 p.m.