



General Faculties Council
TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE
Approved Minutes

September 19, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

AD 167 (Governors Boardroom)/Zoom

Voting Members

Leslie Reid, Co-Chair
Barbara Brown, Academic Co-Chair
Sandra Amin
Fabiola Aparicio-Ting
Rebecca Archer* – arrived during Item 2, left after Item 4
Mark Bauer
Tracey Clancy
Sarah Eaton
Heather Ganshorn
Dianne Gereluk – arrived during Item 4
Dawn Johnston
Fabian Neuhaus
Hieu Ngo*
Leighton Wilks

Non-Voting Members

Natasha Kenny
Vui Kien (VK) Liau
D’Arcy Norman
Trevor Poffenroth
Justine Wheeler – arrived during Item 2,
left after Item 6

Secretary

Courtney McVie

Scribe

Elizabeth Sjogren

Regrets

William Bridel
Michelle Drefs
Yani Jazayeri
Barb McCutcheon
Jennifer Markides
Kirsten Nepriily
Evaristus Oshionebo
Mary-Jo Romaniuk
Verity Turpin

Guests

Nicole Wyatt, Academic Co-Chair, Course Feedback Implementation Working Group (CFIWG) – present for Item 5*
Robin Arseneault, resource person, CFIWG – present for Item 5
Wendy Benoit, member, CFIWG – present for Item 5
Brianna Burkinshaw, member, CFIWG – present for Item 5*
Jackie Lambert, member, CFIWG – present for Item 5*
Ernia Rezaei-Afsah, member, CFIWG – present for Item 5
Erin Spring, member, CFIWG – present for Item 5
Robin Yates, Deputy Provost – present for Item 6

*Attended by Zoom

The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the September 19, 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:

- A Territorial Acknowledgement was presented
- Mark Bauer, Science (Faculty appointee), Sarah Eaton, Education (appointed by the Vice-Provost (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)), and Vui Kien (VK) Liao (Management and Professional Staff representative), were welcomed on this occasion of their first Teaching and Learning Committee meeting
- Members were encouraged to participate in the Truth and Reconciliation activities that will be taking place next Friday, September 29

The Academic Co-Chair remarked that the vibrancy on campus at this time of year is great and thanked the members for all of their hard work.

3. Committee-Specific Orientation

The University Secretary and Governance Coordinator gave a presentation orienting the members to the work of the Committee, including:

- An overview of University's governance, including the legislation informing this, that the University operates with collegial governance, that decisions are made in consideration of the betterment of the institution as a whole, illustration of the General Faculties Council (GFC) committee structure, and the authority framework
- A review of the role and responsibilities of the Committee, as set out in its Terms of Reference
- The ability of the Committee to strike working groups as needed
- The supports provided to the Committee by the Secretariat
- It was reported that a review of the Terms of Reference of all of the GFC standing committees will be undertaken in 2023-2024
- Members were asked to inform the Secretariat about their intended modality for a meeting (attending in-person or by Zoom) or if they cannot attend a meeting

4. Committee Welcome – Touchstones

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. The Co-Chair reviewed the Centre for Courage and Renewal *Touchstones* and the Committee then discussed which of these resonate for them, including:

- “Know that it’s possible...” in relation to work growth, sustainability, learning from others, and learning from doing

- “Be present as fully as possible” including engaging in compassionate listening, learning from and valuing others, and contributing to collaborative work
- “When the going gets rough, turn to wonder” including taking an empathetic approach to others, being aware that people and situations are complicated, and maintaining a productive attitude when work becomes difficult
- “Attend to your own inner teacher” in relation to considering equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA), paying attention to and learning from your and others’ reactions and responses, reflecting on learnings, and developing a circle of trust
- “Learn to respond to others with honest, open questions” because gathering feedback leads to progress
- “No fixing, caving, advising or correcting each other” as there is temptation to help others but they often learn most when they have to help themselves
- “Speak your truth in ways that respect other people’s truth” including that you must trust other people to do their own work, and be aware and open to beliefs and positions changing
- “Trust and learn from the silence” as it is valuable to pause to focus and reflect
- “Observe deep confidentiality” including through the work of committees like this one, where people can openly share what they are experiencing and learn from each other

5. Update from the Course Feedback Implementation Working Group (CFIWG) – Revised New Core Questions for Course Surveys

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 Sandra Amin, Wendy Benoit, Brianne Burkinshaw, Jackie Lambert, Ermia Rezaei-Afsah, Erin Spring, Justine Wheeler, and Robin Arseneault presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters reported on the recent work of the CFIWG, including that the proposed new core questions for course surveys were provided to the University community for feedback after the Committee discussed and suggested amendments to these at its May 16, 2023 meeting. The presenters then reported on recent changes to the proposed new core questions, reviewed the feedback received from the University community, and presented some options for additional changes. The presenters emphasised that the purpose of the questions is to ask students about their learning experiences and not to review the course instructor.
- Discussion included:
 - People will interpret “welcomed and included” in different ways, especially in relation to gender and culture, and so revising Question 1 to centre around respect rather than welcome and inclusion is good. Some concern was expressed about centering Question 1 in this way, however, as it implies understanding that some course environments may not be respectful. The Committee discussed the two presented options for rewording Question 1:
 - A student’s response to “I found the course atmosphere respectful” could be impacted if fellow students are not respectful. Managing student behaviour in the classroom can be a challenge.

- “I felt the instructor was committed to creating a respectful environment” allows students to respond that they are satisfied that reasonable effort was made to provide a positive environment even if some issues remain
- It was suggested that “I felt welcomed and included” could be replaced with “I felt a sense of belonging”, as this shifts some accountability to the student. It was observed, however, that feeling a sense of belonging is a process and some first-year students may feel respected but not belonging.
- If the course survey indicates negativity in a student’s learning environment this should be followed up on and rectified, but the survey may not gather information on what is specifically happening to a student and why. For example, a student may express that they feel disrespected or excluded but this may not be by the instructor.
- Some students are required to take a course that they are not thrilled about, and this may impact their responses to the course survey
- The Committee discussed the proposed options for adding a question on reflective learning:
 - It was observed that none of the three proposed options include the word “reflect”, and the presenters reported that this is a deliberate survey design practice that is meant to make the question language accessible to all
 - Option 2 (“I was encouraged to be actively aware of my learning throughout the course”) and Option 3 (“I gained a deeper understanding in the course by connecting different pieces of information and/or experience”) are both clearly about learning, and Option 3 captures synthesis and thus is a strong option, but Option 1 (“I formed new ideas or understandings about the course material”) is not as clear
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - Using Explorance Blue as the survey platform is seeing a stronger response rate than Class Climate did
 - The new course survey questions will be piloted for two years and then assessed
 - Faculties are determining the Faculty-level course survey questions, and these will have more specificity. Instructors will be able to add up to two questions of their own.
- Following discussion, the Committee determined that the CFIWG is ready to present its work to the General Faculties Council for additional feedback at this time

6. Operational Plan – Academic Plan

Robin Yates, Deputy Provost, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter reported on the development of the University’s next Academic Plan, including:
 - *Ahead of Tomorrow*, the University’s strategic plan for 2023-2030, was approved in June 2023
 - *Ahead of Tomorrow* will have four implementation plans that are currently being drafted: the Academic Plan, the Research and Innovation Plan, the Community Plan, and the

Operational Plan. A number of initiatives will crosscut the implementation plans, and so effort is being made to draft these collaboratively.

- The implementation plans will run 2024-2027 and 2028-2030
 - Drafts of the implementation plans will be released to the University community in late September or early October, and there will be approximately six weeks of feedback gathering leading to refinement of the plans. The timeline for the approval of the implementation plans by the General Faculties Council and Board of Governors is not currently set.
 - The Strategic Planning Oversight Committee will be meeting to review the implementation plans process
 - *Ahead of Tomorrow* is approved and its content is not being reconsidered. The tactical feedback being sought is about how to achieve the University's stated strategies, goals, and objectives, in what order to approach these, and setting assessable metrics.
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - Faculties have their own cadence for Faculty strategic plans, and while some Faculties have put their strategic planning on hold to await the content of the *Ahead of Tomorrow* implementation plans this is not required as there will be opportunities for Faculties to engage and participate regardless of what stage of strategic planning they are in. Deans have been involved in the early drafting of the Academic Plan and the Research and Innovation Plan.
 - The early draft of the Academic Plan does not specifically identify the use of Open Educational Resources (OERs) as a best practice. The University is aware that accessibility is a concern, and options to address this include encouraging the use of OERs, having copies of course materials in the University's library, and offering Teaching and Learning Grants to support the development of OERs. During the feedback gathering stage, members of the University community can advocate for the specific inclusion of reference to OERs in the initiatives and metrics of the Academic Plan.

7. Teaching and Learning Updates and Emerging Issues (Roundtable)

The Academic Co-Chair described the purpose of this item, which is to allow the members to raise and discuss any matters currently impacting teaching and learning, and reported that the item will be skipped today due to lack of time but will be on the next agenda.

8. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning Report

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

Highlights:

- This year's cycle for the University of Calgary Teaching Awards program was shifted, and submissions are due September 22, 2023. A call for adjudicators will be issued soon, and it was noted that the adjudication committees are collegial and provide a good opportunity for participants to see others' teaching dossiers and practices.

- The University of Calgary Teaching and Learning Grants program provides an opportunity to leverage support to develop priorities, such as work-integrated learning (WIL). There are three streams of Teaching and Learning Grants: Development and Innovation grants, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning grants, and Educational Leadership grants. The deadline to apply is October 30, 2023.

9. Graduate Students' Association Report

There was no report.

10. Students' Union Report

Sandra Amin, Students' Union (SU) member of the committee, presented this item.

Highlights:

- Some students do not have a laptop or are experiencing a broken laptop. It has been heard that students are not being directed to laptop rentals, and communication needs to improve about options for students.
- The deadline to submit to the 2023 Undergraduate Research Symposium is September 29, 2023. An awards announcement will be posted on November 22 and award recipients will be celebrated in-person during the Symposium events on November 22 and 23, 2023. Members were asked to encourage students to participate.
- The deadline to nominate for the SU Teaching Excellence Awards is October 20, 2023
- The SU's Make a Thing experiential event will be held in February 2024 and will utilise maker spaces across the University. The SU will be reaching out to units about spaces and encouraging participation in this event.

11. Other Business

There was no other business.

12. Adjournment

Moved/Seconded

That the Teaching and Learning Committee adjourn the September 19, 2023 meeting.

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 3:56 p.m.