



General Faculties Council
TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE
Approved Minutes

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

AD 167 (Governors Boardroom)/Zoom

Voting Members

Leslie Reid, Co-Chair
Sandra Amin
Fabiola Aparicio-Ting* – left during Item 6
Mark Bauer
William Bridel*
Sarah Eaton
Dianne Gereluk – arrived during Item 5
Jennifer Markides* – arrived during Item 4, left during Item 6
Dawn Johnston
Hieu Ngo
Evaristus Oshionebo
Leighton Wilks

Non-Voting Members

Michelle Drefs
Natasha Kenny
Vui Kien Liao
D’Arcy Norman
Justine Wheeler

Secretary

Courtney McVie*

Scribe

Elizabeth Sjogren

Regrets

Barbara Brown, Academic Co-Chair
Rebecca Archer
Tracey Clancy
Heather Ganshorn
Yani Jazayeri
Barb McCutcheon
Kirsten Nepriily
Fabian Neuhaus
Trevor Poffenroth
Mary-Jo Romaniuk
Verity Turpin

Guests

Robin Arseneault, resource person, Course Feedback Implementation Working Group (CFIWG) – present for Item 4
Jeff Crowe, Director - IT Customer Tech., Client Services, Education Technology Solutions – attended for Trevor Poffenroth
Amy Dambrowitz, Registrar – present for Item 6
Vanessa Wood, Deputy Registrar – present for Item 6
Nicole Wyatt, Academic Co-Chair, CFIWG – present for Item 4

*via Zoom

The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved/Seconded

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

Carried

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

The Co-Chair reported that the Academic Co-Chair is away today, and expressed gratitude to the members for their participation.

3. Approval of the September 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the Teaching and Learning Committee meeting held on September 19, 2023 be approved.

Carried

4. Update from the Course Feedback Implementation Working Group (CFIWG): General Faculties Council Discussion and Feedback, Next Steps

Leslie Reid, Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) and Co-Chair of the CFIWG, Nicole Wyatt, Academic Co-Chair of the CFIWG, and Robin Arseneault, CFIWG resource person, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents began with an update that the CFIWG was reflecting on metacognition at its last meeting
- The proponents then reported on the presentation they gave at the October 5, 2023 General Faculties Council (GFC) meeting about the proposed new course survey name and six core institutional questions and the subsequent discussion, including:
 - The GFC was reminded that the new course survey is to be about the student experience and not about rating a professor. The GFC was told that the new course survey will consist of six core institutional questions, eight Faculty questions, and up to two instructor questions.
 - The six core institutional questions presented to the GFC were (question #4 is revised from the version the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) saw in September):
 1. *I understood what was expected of me as a student in this course* (Likert)
 2. *I received feedback during the course that contributed to my learning* (Likert)
 3. *I was provided opportunity through the course assessments to demonstrate my learning* (Likert)

4. *In this course, I became more aware of the ways that I learn* (Likert)
 5. *I felt there was a respectful learning atmosphere in this course* (Likert)
 6. *Please provide additional information for any of your answers above* (open comment box)
- The GFC was given opportunity to provide immediate feedback to the proponents through a live feedback form, and there was strong endorsement for the new title and all of the questions except for question #4
 - The overall response from GFC during the discussion was very positive, and there is an appetite to move ahead with developing the additional Faculty and instructor questions and launch the new course survey. While the proposed institutional questions are not perfect and there is some reservation, the GFC was clear that it is time to move forward.
 - Feedback during the GFC discussion noted the difference between memory/recall and learning and it had been asked whether the CFIWG had considered asking about memory/recall and not only metacognition
- The proponents reported that the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President Research (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) was consulted and she is in favour of using the word “respectful” in the Likert question *I felt there was a respectful learning atmosphere in this course*. It is possible that the suggested language “sense of belonging” or “welcoming” might be used in the future, but for now it is being proposed to use a word that is less likely to be misinterpreted.
 - Discussion included:
 - The positive response by the GFC gives hope that the new course survey will be embraced at the Faculty level as well
 - The words “*more aware of the ways that I learn*” may cause students to think about their learning styles. There is a difference between how a student learns and the ways they learn, and it was suggested that consideration be given to using the word “how”. It was also suggested that the question read “aware of” and not “more aware of”, as some students may not have thought about this, and read “my approach to learning” and not “the ways that I learn”. The proponents indicated that the CFIWG will continue to think about this question, as it is meant to provide an opportunity for students to reflect upon their learning.
 - The new survey questions provide opportunity to have discussions about learning, especially question #4 which has no clear right answer.
 - Metacognition is not a priority of some instructors and is not talked about in some classrooms, and some students may be unsure what to do with question #4. Upper-year students may have ideas about how they learn, but first-year students will likely not. The proponents reported that during consultation some students expressed that metacognition is important to them and asking about this is seen as a priority core question.
 - The new survey questions will provide positive information if the students understand the purpose of the survey. It is hoped that instructors will be able to use the results of the survey to ensure that they are meeting the needs and interests of students.
 - In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - Explorance Blue allows for there to be different questions for undergraduate and graduate courses

- Focus groups with students can be held before the new survey is launched
- The proposal for approval will set out that the new course survey will be piloted for one year and then reviewed, and then going forward the survey will be reviewed on a three to four-year cycle
- There will be educative communication pieces when the new survey launches to explain the purpose of the survey questions
- The proponents reported that the Office of Institutional Analysis will be asked to review the new survey questions for operationality before they are presented for approval. It is expected that the proposal will come to the TLC in November for recommendation and to the GFC in December for approval, and then the new survey will roll out in the Spring term.

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

The Committee was given an opportunity to discuss matters currently impacting teaching and learning, and conversation included that:

- A working group, consisting of members from units including the Taylor Institute, Libraries and Cultural Resources, and the Werklund School of Education, is meeting to discuss generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in teaching and learning, and the working group will discuss elements such as what content relating to this should be in course outlines and misconduct regulations, and how AI-generated content should be cited. A webpage with information and links to resources about AI and teaching and learning is being developed.
- The Department of Mathematics and Statistics is reviewing its first-year courses and in particular the Calculus courses. The Department's Introductory Calculus course (Mathematics 249) is used as a gateway course and consideration is being given to changing this to be a pass/fail course and removing its antirequisite, and the Department is interested in hearing from other units that have students who take this course and learning from other units that do pass/fail courses. Discussion included:
 - Pass/fail is a common model for first-year courses and some institutions use this broadly
 - The pressure from course content, assignments, and grades takes away from focus on learning, and so switching to this model is supported. It was suggested that competence/mastery might be a better model than pass/fail however.
 - A number or letter grade gives a student clear information about how prepared they may be to take the next course, but pass/fail grading does not provide this
 - It was suggested that the Department consider merging similar introductory Mathematics courses in addition to moving to a pass/fail model. The member indicated that merging courses is not being considered at this time.
 - Some students, for example international students without a strong English language competency, may be taking Mathematics as a means to raise their Grade Point Average (GPA) because it is less language intensive and so a pass/fail model for introductory Mathematics could be detrimental.
 - The Co-Chair reported that the University's *Guiding Principles for Assessment of Student Learning* will be discussed at the November meeting of the TLC, and this will be an opportunity to continue this discussion

- Libraries and Cultural Resources is releasing *Building Resilience to Misinformation: An Instructional Toolkit* which is a guide to assist faculty in talking with students about the topic of misinformation. The toolkit will have four modules (Introduction to Misinformation, Encounters with Misinformation, The (Dis)information Landscape, and Information Response) and faculty will be able to use some or all of the modules and use or customise the provided script and activities. A survey will be conducted next semester to assess the usefulness of the guide.
- Students, faculty, and staff are under tremendous stress at this time, in part likely due to the pandemic and other world events, and this is reflected in the results of the University's *Faculty and Staff Mental Health and Well-being Survey* that were released today which shows a concerning number of people expressing that they are experiencing burnout and issues with wellness. As the Academic Plan and Research Plan are developed this semester, there should be sensitivity to the workload and mental health of students, faculty, and staff. The Co-Chair observed that the Campus Mental Health Strategy (CMHS) is undergoing renewal this year and Andrew Szeto, the Director of the CMHS, could be invited to a TLC meeting to talk with the committee and gather feedback as part of the renewal consultation process.
- Information Technologies was applauded for the new technology recently installed in some classrooms
- Matters relating to sessional instructors are not well understood, and information about proper and coordinated practices and support for sessional instructors is needed. The Co-Chair remarked that this is complicated and that some specialists from Human Resources could be invited to a TLC meeting to talk about this.

6. Changes to the Academic Regulations: Section E (Course Information) & G (Examinations and Tests)

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Amy Dambrowitz, Registrar, Vanessa Wood, Deputy Registrar, and Leslie Reid presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents reported that proposed changes to Section E.1 (Course Outlines) and Section G (Examinations and Tests) of the Academic Regulations in the University Calendar are being presented for discussion by the TLC and the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee at this time. The changes are intended to modernize the language, set out current best practices, and make the regulations more easily understandable, and aim to strike a balance between allowing innovation but also having consistency.
- The proponents recalled that changes to Section G were made recently, largely in part to respond to changes to practice during the pandemic, and observed that this section of the Calendar will always need updating to match evolving practices.
- The proponents reported that a workshop was held in July 2023 to consider these sections of the Calendar, and that the specific priorities identified were to:
 - Include more information in course outlines about assessment and evaluation, including the dates of assessments, clarity about the process for missed assessments, a list of the resources and tools that can or cannot be used for assessments (e.g. textbooks, AI tools), clarity about assessed group work, and the definitions of required and recommended readings
 - Update the information about online and in-course assessments and include more information about take-home, open-book, and presentation assessments, and make this

- content clearer
- Provide better guidelines regarding in-term assessments and final exams
- Review if the assessment content relating to online and blended environments is still necessary post-pandemic and if so if the content needs editing for clarity
- Consider the process for missed assessments, including when a student can do a missed or deferred assessment and the maximum weight that can be transferred to the final examination
- The proponents noted that requests for deferred final exams are increasing and that the regulations relating to this need to be reviewed, in particular in regard to presenting other options to deferral and how many deferred exams a student can have before an alert is sent to their Faculty advisor and the Student Success Centre
- The proponents indicated that the principles relating to assessment are being considered at this time, and later the University will move on to developing a common grading scheme
- Discussion included:
 - Conversation about the differences between regulations, policies, and procedures
 - That students, faculty, and staff know to look to the Calendar for information about regulations and it is therefore important that these be current and clear
 - Some students are struggling to prioritize their course responsibilities, in some cases to the point of burnout, and instructors should think about how much time they are expecting of students outside of class time and communicate this to students. It was observed that students are different, either due to neurodiversity or how they engage with their work, and it can give a false impression to indicate the time commitment of an assignment or assessment.
 - That there needs to be clarity about the reasonable expectations for accommodation and missed assessments and what documentation is required. The proponents indicated that Section M1 of the Calendar (Supporting Documentation) sets out the regulation for this.
 - That most requests for deferrals and accommodations will be reasonable, and only a small part of the student population may try to abuse these options
 - Explicit details and instructions in the Academic Regulations are desired by students, faculty, and staff and this explicit information will be especially crucial to international students whose experiences and cultural expectations may be different from domestic students
 - Graduate students take fewer courses than undergraduate students and so the number of deferrals before an alert is sent to the Faculty advisor and Student Success Centre should differ for graduate students. The proponents reported that the new Calendar software will allow for a different application of the regulations for graduate students.
 - An instructor's practices regarding the assessment of group work must be clearly set out, including about what is done about lack of participation by a group member. It is possible that conflicts regarding the assessment of group work could be resolved before moving to formal appeal.
 - Knowing the dates of assessments from the course outline will allow students to strategize their semester

- Deviation from the information on a course outline, such as the required readings or course materials, should be approved by the Department Head or equivalent and this should include changes to assessment dates too
- It should be made clear what course outline content is required by the University and what content is recommended
- Instructors must ensure that required readings, course materials, and tools are accessible to students, such as having copies of readings available in the library system and software available on laboratory or library computers, as items that have an associated cost are contentious due to being seen as additional fees. The course outline should make clear what items are required and what are optional.
 - The Students' Union (SU) member of the committee reported that there is increasing concern being expressed by students regarding paid platforms being used in courses with no affordable alternative or availability on University computers, and students are reporting not being able to access and complete assignments because they do not have access to the needed platform.
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - An environmental scan of the practices of the U15 institutions relating to assessment was conducted
 - Some Faculties operate differently from others, and a course may have a supplemental course syllabus, but all Faculties should be complying with the course outlines regulation
- The Co-Chair indicated that this item will return to the committee for further discussion and there will likely be another workshop that members can attend

7. 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:

- The internal peer review deadline for the University of Calgary Teaching and Learning Grants Program is October 30, 2023 and the application deadline is January 15, 2024. Mindi Summers, Faculty of Science, has taken on leadership for the Teaching and Learning Grants and she can provide one-on-one consultation if needed.
- A new Taylor Institute resource on creating inclusive course outlines has been developed, and members are encouraged to share this within their networks

8. Graduate Students' Association Report

There was no report.

9. Students' Union Report

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

Highlights:

- Academic Integrity Week is being held October 16-20, 2023. A number of sessions are scheduled and informational tables will be set up in MacEwan Hall
- The SU Teaching Excellence awards Fall session nominations deadline is October 20, 2023 and then adjudication will occur
- The submissions for the Undergraduate Research Symposium have been shortlisted and adjudication is underway

10. Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Adjournment**Moved/Seconded**

That the Teaching and Learning Committee adjourn the October 17, 2023 meeting.

Carried

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

Courtney McVie
University Secretary