



General Faculties Council
TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE
Approved Minutes

November 21, 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*
Mark Bauer
William Bridel
Tracey Clancy
Sarah Eaton
Heather Ganshorn – arrived during Item 2, left after Item 6
Dianne Gereluk – arrived during Item 2
Yani Jazayeri
Dawn Johnston*

Regrets

Barb McCutcheon
Jennifer Markides
Kirsten Neprily
Fabian Neuhaus
Hieu Ngo
Evaristus Oshionebo
Trevor Poffenroth
Mary-Jo Romaniuk
Leighton Wilks

Guests

Robin Arseneault, resource person, Course Feedback Implementation Working Group (CFIWG) – present for Item 4
Adil Arshad, Residence Life Coordinator – present for Item 6
Penny Werthner, Interim Provost and Vice-President (Academic) – present for Item 5
Nicole Wyatt, Academic Co-Chair, CFIWG – present for Item 4

*via Zoom

Non-Voting Members

Michelle Drefs – arrived during Item 2
Natasha Kenny
Vui Kien Liao
D’Arcy Norman
Verity Turpin
Justine Wheeler

Secretary

Courtney McVie

Scribe

Elizabeth Sjogren

The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Approval of the Agenda**Moved/Seconded**

That the Agenda for the November 21, 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:

- Heather Ganshorn, member appointed by the Libraries and Cultural Resources Council, was thanked on this occasion of her last meeting
- It is special to have the recommendation of the course surveys new name and questions on this Agenda as getting this project to this stage has been a priority before her term as Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) ended and this is the last meeting of the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) for the Co-Chair
- Barbara Brown was thanked for her great partnership as Academic Co-Chair

The Academic Co-Chair thanked Leslie Reid, outgoing Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) and Co-Chair of the TLC, for her outstanding leadership and all of her contributions to moving the University ahead in teaching and learning, and indicated that a roundtable of thanks and sharing will be conducted later in the meeting.

3. Approval of the October 17, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the Teaching and Learning Committee meeting held on October 17, 2023 be approved.

Carried

4. Recommendation of the Approval by GFC of the New Name and New Core Questions for University of Calgary Course Surveys (currently the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI))

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 Robin Arseneault, CFIWG resource person, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents thanked the Committee for its feedback as the proposal for the new name and new core questions for University of Calgary course surveys was developed, and thanked

members who had also participated in workshops and consultation meetings. It is felt that the new questions are ready for approval and launch.

- The proponents reported that the new core questions will be formally reviewed in one year's time, and that the CFIWG is currently establishing how this review will occur. The CFIWG will also prepare a guiding document relating to course surveys.
- The Committee congratulated the CFIWG on all of the work that went into bringing the proposal to this point, and agreed that the questions are ready to be moved forward for approval now

Moved/Seconded

That the Teaching and Learning Committee recommend that the General Faculties Council approve the new survey name (UCalgary Course Experience Survey) and proposed six new core institutional course survey questions, as set out in the document provided to the Committee, replacing the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) survey name and questions.

Carried

5. Academic Innovation Plan

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Penny Werthner, Interim Provost and Vice-President (Academic), presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponent provided an overview of the process followed to develop the Academic Innovation Plan, noting that the Academic Innovation Plan is one of four *Ahead of Tomorrow* strategic plan implementation plans. The proponent reported that:
 - The *Ahead of Tomorrow* strategic plan has three academic objectives (to become the #1 university in the U15 for student engagement, to increase total student enrolment by 10,000 to 46,000, and to ensure that all students are provided opportunities for meaningful entrepreneurial and critical thinking)
 - The Academic Innovation Plan is organized into four domains of focus (Transformative Student Experience, Innovative Academic Programs, Increase Influence and Investment with our Communities, and Inclusive, Caring and Sustainable Campus Culture)
 - The Academic Innovation Plan describes priority initiatives including to provide one semester of financial support and wrap-around services for first-in-family students, to increase average financial support for thesis-based graduate students to highest level in the U15, and to develop a Digital Learning Strategy for the University that includes the platforms, technologies, professional learning opportunities, and resources to offer high-quality online learning across the institution
- Discussion included that:
 - The development of a Digital Learning Strategy is welcomed, especially because online and blended learning need sufficient platforms, design support, and strong student advising. It was observed that the development of a Digital Learning Strategy connects to both the Academic Innovation Plan and the Operations Plan.
 - The University of Calgary Teaching Grants can be used to grow teaching practices and drive innovation, including for online and blended courses

- The University is internationally recognized as a leader in teaching and learning practices
- Pursuing the scholarship of teaching and learning should be encouraged
- That key initiatives 3.1 (Expand and enhance blended and online learning opportunities in courses and programs) and 3.2 (Expand research and experiential/work integrated learning (WIL) opportunities in partnership with community and industry) can be connected, such as that elements of the Digital Learning Strategy can be tested through research
- Affordability connects with student engagement, and it was suggested that the Academic Innovation Plan could reference the value in developing Open Educational Resources (OERs) at the University
- It is appreciated that the document reiterates the University's commitment to its Campus Mental Health Strategy, but it was suggested that the Academic Innovation Plan could include content specifically relating to student, faculty, and staff workload and wellbeing. It was noted that units could possibly coordinate the timing of students' assignments and assessments to address workload issues, particularly because some students are juggling employment and family commitments in addition to their studies.
- It is important to consider the supports provided to sessional instructors, including professional development opportunities, and it was suggested that consideration be given to adding content to the Academic Innovation Plan relating to this
- It will be necessary to let some practices go in order to grow and create priority practices
- Real-time student engagement measurement, such as using the tools available in D2L, and the sharing of this data with administrators by instructors, would allow for prompt addressing of factors what would improve student experiences
- As the student population grows, it will be important to scale student support services, such as within Libraries and Cultural Resources. It was suggested that the initiative relating to student support (2.4.iii) also include text stating that positive teaching and learning experiences need to be enabled too.
- The current admission averages of students entering the University are dauntingly high, and as the student population grows consideration could be given to utilising more holistic admissions practices
- Academic processes, such as for reappraisals and appeals, can be hard for students to understand, and this can impact the student experience
- The domain of focus 'Inclusive, Caring and Sustainable Campus Culture' was applauded. It was observed that, in order to build the desired welcoming environment, some changes will need to happen including addressing sexual and gender-based violence and improving student supervision.
- The offering of more research and experiential learning opportunities within course work, in addition to programs such as the Program for Undergraduate Research Experience (PURE) awards, would be good for some students. It was noted that the early *Ahead of Tomorrow* idea to have a required course in entrepreneurial thinking was changed into the statement that students should have meaningful entrepreneurial and critical thinking opportunities so that students have the flexibility to identify courses and/or programs that meet their wishes.
- It was suggested that the Academic Innovation Plan could be more connected to other University documents. For example, initiative 2.3.f (advancing innovative approaches to

the assessment of student learning within our academic programs that support evidence-based practices) could refer to the GFC Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook which describes the use of teaching dossiers.

- The proponent expressed appreciation to the Committee for the valuable feedback on this important and impactful implementation plan, and invited members to submit additional feedback if desired

6. Guiding Principles for the Assessment of Student Learning

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Natasha Kenny, Senior Director, Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning, Barbara Brown, Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), Werklund School of Education, and Adil Arshad, Residence Life Coordinator, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters reported that guiding principles for the assessment of student learning are being developed, and a group (the Assessment Principles Group (APG)) is being established to work on this over the next 12-18 months. The presenters observed that the assessment of student learning is becoming an area of focus in the higher education sector, that the pandemic triggered thought about assessment practices and changes to some practices, and that it has been decided that research-informed institutional guiding principles for the assessment of student learning would be helpful to guide future decision-making.
- The presenters reported that an environmental scan of assessment practices within the U15 has been conducted, and a report on this has been produced. The next steps in this initiative will include establishing the APG terms of reference and membership, releasing a literature review report, preparing a consultation strategy, engaging in consultation, drafting the guiding principles, and then bringing the guiding principles through governance bodies for approval.
- Discussion included that:
 - It will be necessary to be clear whether the guiding principles are meant to be directive or suggestive
 - The assessment of both undergraduate and graduate students is important, and the work of the APG should consider both
 - Modernized assessment practices are needed
 - Being under-resourced may impact the ability to implement current best practices in assessment
 - The growth of the student population will add increased pressures to assessment practices
 - The APG's literature review and comparative analysis of assessment practices will be a useful and publishable document
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - It has not yet been determined if the Calendar will include a link to the guiding principles, such as in Section G of the Academic Regulations (Academic Assessments and Examinations)
 - There are scholars at the University studying Universal Design Learning, as it is considered

important to increase accessibility in assessment, and this subject will be addressed in the APG's literature report

- The Co-Chair reported that the guiding principles will return to the Committee for discussion at a future meeting

7. Teaching and Learning Updates and Emerging Issues Roundtable

The Committee was given an opportunity to discuss matters currently impacting teaching and learning and discussion included that workload and world events are putting tremendous pressure on students, faculty, and staff.

The Committee then celebrated Leslie Reid, Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) and Co-Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC), on this occasion of her last TLC meeting, specifically recognizing her collegial and inspiring leadership style and commitment to teaching and learning.

8. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning Report

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Natasha Kenny highlighted that the theme of the 2024 Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching will be 'Courageous Practices: Equity, Diversity and Belonging in Postsecondary Education' and encouraged members and their students to participate in the conference.

9. Graduate Students' Association Report

There was no report.

10. Students' Union Report

Sandra Amin, Students' Union member of the committee, reported that the Undergraduate Research Symposium runs November 22-23, 2023 and members are encouraged to support students and this event.

11. Other Business

There was no other business.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 3:58 p.m.